
THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
1800

HOLIDAY HOURS IMPROVED.



Painted by W. Gill. Engr. C. Rolls

"See! they engage! They have got into the game."

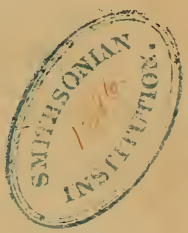
Page 31.


HOLIDAY
HOURS
IMPROVED
AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION

169

HOLIDAY HOURS

IMPROVED.



PREPARED FOR THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION.

PHILADELPHIA:
AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION,
No. 146 Chestnut Street.
New York, *No.* 147 *Nassau Street*.....Boston, *No.* 9 *Cornhill.*
Louisville, *No.* 103 *Fourth Street.*

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
WASHINGTON
BV4571
.H53

Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1850, by the
AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

☞ No books are published by the AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION without the sanction of the Committee of Publication, consisting of fourteen members, from the following denominations of Christians, viz. Baptist, Methodist, Congregationalist, Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Reformed Dutch. Not more than three of the members can be of the same denomination, and no book can be published to which any member of the Committee shall object.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Didn't Think	7
A Hymn for the New Year	87
The Two Builders	91
The House on the Sand	104
Poll Pegg	108
Psalm LXXI	125
Barnaby Biggles, the Man of Many Sorrows	127
A Summer Evening	142
The Hurricane At Sea	146
A Contented Mind	165
The Infant Prayer	167
Time and Eternity	170

PAGE

The Sting of Death is Sin.....171

Hymn in Sickness.....177

The Persecuted Astronomer.....179

The Kingdom of God.....195

The Cripple.....199

The Mystery of Nature, the Type of a Glorious Resurrection.....220

DIDN'T THINK.

ESTHER came into the sitting-room, swept up the hearth, fixed the books upon the table, then looked out at the window both up and down the street. She saw nobody, and walked back to the fire. Presently a loud knock was heard at the door. Esther ran into the entry, and hastened to open it.

"Mother is expecting you," said she, to a kind, pleasant looking gentleman who stepped in.

"Come directly up, doctor," said a voice from the top of the stairs. The doctor went up. Esther looked wistfully after him, but she did not follow. She turned and went back into the sitting-room.

"Oh!" sighed Esther, "oh, if dear little sister should die!" and the tears rushed to her

eyes at the thought of it. She drew her kerchief from her pocket and wiped the tears away: but others quickly followed.

Nancy came from the kitchen to bring some plates from the closet.

"Why, Esther, what is the matter?" she cried at seeing her tears. "Has any thing happened?"

"It is enough to happen that the baby is so sick: the doctor has just come in, and I feel as if she was certainly going to die, and I can't bear the thought of it," said Esther,—crying and wiping her eyes afresh.

"We must hope for the best," answered Nancy. "I have seen a great many sick children in my day, and it does not seem to me that this one is near dying to-day, though we cannot tell how it will turn up in the end."

"You don't know, perhaps, Nancy. I am certain mother is frightened. She told me to go down stairs when the doctor came. I dare say she does not want me to know the worst, for she knows how dearly I love little Ellen, and I shall feel so badly."

"I would not feel so bad till I knew what the doctor says," said Nancy. "There's no use to worry yourself upon uncertainties."

"I suppose you cannot feel as I do," answered Esther, turning her back to Nancy; "she's my sister, and my only sister, and I always wanted one. I love her dearly. I am sure I shall die if she does;" and there was also something in Esther's tone which seemed to say, "you've no feeling for me, Nancy: you cannot sympathize with me."

Nancy took her plates and went out.

"She has no feeling!" muttered Esther to herself. "Nancy does not think much of dear Ellen's sickness; but *I* do—I cannot help it."

Esther looked sorrowfully into the fire, then wiped her eyes and sat down: but she could not sit still. She went to the book-case, and looking over the titles of the books, took down one which was a great favourite of her's, full of stories. She was soon deeply interested—so much so that she did not mind her Aunt Jane when she came into the room.

"Put on your bonnet, Esther," said Aunt Jane. "I want you to go on an errand."

"In one minute,"—cried Esther, her eyes fixed on the page.

"No, my dear, not a minute is to be lost: I want you to go directly to the apothecary's to get some medicine."

"Yes, oh yes!" cried Esther, starting up, tossing down her book and running into the entry for her bonnet and shawl. "What did the doctor say, aunt? Nancy does not think much of Ellen's sickness, but *I* do—I have been feeling dreadfully about it. What *did* the doctor say, aunt?"

"I can hardly tell," answered Aunt Jane, who was looking for a vial in the closet. "He did not say a great deal. He told what ought to be immediately done. Here is the vial, and here is the prescription, and here is your mother's purse to pay for the medicine. Go to Foster's at the corner, and be as quick as you can."

"Yes, yes, I know. Dear little Nelly! I

wonder if she will know me when I get back. Why, aunt, do you believe me, she did not know me this morning when I went into the chamber. She stared at me and cried! Was it not dreadful, aunt? I liked to have cried too."

"Go, my dear,"—said Aunt Jane, "and make haste."

Esther took the vial, prescription and purse, and set off.

Of course, if Esther took her little sister's sickness so much to heart, she will do this errand with all the speed possible.

Her mother gave her about twenty minutes to be gone. "Possibly sooner than that," said Aunt Jane, "for Esther seems to feel Ellen's sickness a great deal. Nancy found her in the sitting-room crying sadly about it."

Mrs. Clark looked at the watch, then at little Ellen, who was lying in the crib, and she began to bathe her head in cold water. The child's face was red, her forehead was hot, and her half-opened eyes were dull and heavy. Mrs. Clark kept doing what she could for the sick

baby. Every now and then, she listened for Esther's returning footsteps, and cast her eyes anxiously towards the watch.

Twenty minutes went by.

"Esther has not come yet," said her mother; "may be she could not be waited upon as soon as she got there."

Five minutes more, and no Esther.

Another five minutes are gone. "It is now half an hour," said Mrs. Clark. "Where *can* Esther be?"

She went to the window, and looked out with a troubled air.

Another five minutes. "The medicine ought to be here," said Aunt Jane. "I sent Esther because I thought she would do the errand quicker than Nancy,—she seemed to feel so much. Something special must have hindered her, I am sure."

Five minutes more, and no Esther. "She has had full time to go and come twice," said Mrs. Clark.

"Foster perhaps did not have the medicine,"

said Aunt Jane. "I dare say Esther had to go farther."

Every step before the house they thought must be Esther's, but every step disappointed them. At last, Mrs. Clark went down into the kitchen to despatch Nancy after her.

"I want you to put by your work, Nancy, and go and find Esther. The medicine ought to have been here at least twenty minutes ago. I told her to buy it at Foster's on the corner. Do not wait for your shawl, but go as fast as you can. Ellen ought to have taken it before this. Be as quick as you can, Nancy."

"Yes, ma'am," answered the obliging Nancy, wiping the suds from her hands: "yes, ma'am. When folks are sick every thing depends upon doing things in season. It is a wonder where she is, for she took on mortally this morning because Ellen was sick."

Nancy hurried on her bonnet at once, and set off at a quick rate. She reached the store, without meeting Esther. She peeped through the glass door, but no Esther was within.

"I can but just ask if she's been here, that will satisfy me," thought she, going in and inquiring of the clerk, "if Miss Esther Clark had been there for some doctor's stuff."

"A while ago," answered he,—"half an hour may be."

"Dear me!" cried Nancy, "where in the world can she be? She must needs have hurt herself, or broken the vial, or something dreadful has happened to her to stay away so when the baby is so sick and all that."

Poor Nancy shut the door, and looked up and down the street with strained eyes. She was sure she did not know which way to go to find Esther. The clerk then stepped out, and said, "As soon as she got out of the shop, some girls joined her, and I guess they followed the dancing monkeys round this corner."

"Following dancing monkeys!" cried Nancy. "Esther would not do that, with that physic in her hands, I know."

However she darted around the corner, and saw some way down a great collection

of people on the side-walk before a house, evidently very much taken up with something, though she could not see what.

"Esther *cannot* be straying off there! But I'll just go and take a look," and Nancy made her way towards the crowd as fast as possible. As she came nearer, sure enough there were four monkeys, cutting up all sorts of capers to the music of a hand-organ. At any other time Nancy would have been overcome with delight and laughter; but, as it was, the faithful girl was intent only on finding Esther. At last she spied her, with two or three of her companions, the vial in her hand, her eyes on the monkeys and all her thoughts too, for the thoughts are very apt to be led away by the eyes. Nancy elbowed her way through the crowd, and at last caught Esther by the shoulder. "Oh," she cried, "is this bringing home the physic as quick as they told you, Esther? Is this caring much for the sick baby? Who would have thought of this, after the ado you made this morning?"

Such words! and from Nancy too, with whom she felt half angry but a little while before, on account of her not feeling as much for the baby as she did!

How Esther started! how pale she turned!

"I did not think," cried Esther; "oh, I did not think."

"It is a pretty poor excuse, I'm thinking," said Nancy,, "and one that would not comfort you much, if the baby should die for not having the medicine in season."

"Why, I have not been here but a minute," cried Esther,—almost out of breath in trying to follow Nancy, who had seized the vial, and was marching home at a very quick step.

"It's almost an hour, I guess, since your mother sent you."

"I am sure I did not think it was so long," said Esther, hanging down her head in shame and dismay.

On reaching home, Nancy ran up-stairs with the medicine, while Esther was glad enough to turn into the sitting-room, not de-

siring and scarcely daring to meet her mother, or her Aunt Jane. But, as it happened, Aunt Jane was down-stairs.

"My child!" she exclaimed, on seeing Esther, "where is the medicine? What has hindered you?"

"Nancy took it up-stairs. I bought it in season, but I stopped a minute—I stopped just to see some dancing monkeys." Esther looked much mortified at this confession.

"Not only one minute, but thirty! and that too when it was so important you should be back."

"Oh, Aunt Jane, *I did not think!*" cried Esther.

"Didn't *think!*" repeated Aunt Jane in a grave and severe tone. "Didn't think! To be in such circumstances, and not *think!*"

Aunt Jane had heard Esther give this reason before now, and she went on. "God has made you capable of thinking, Esther. He expects you to think. He has given you duties to do, to your father, to your mother, to

your brothers and your sisters,—duties which you must think about in order to do. You cannot be depended upon—you cannot be trusted, unless you *think*."

"Oh, Aunt Jane, do not say any more," exclaimed Esther, bursting into tears. "I know it all. I know it is no excuse at all. I know that it is weak and silly. People without any wit can make such an excuse, but I know I cannot."

Esther left the room and crept up-stairs. She passed by her mother's door, but was afraid to go in. She wanted to inquire after little Ellen. She wanted to know exactly what her danger was. She wished she could tell her how sorry and ashamed she was to forget her for the monkeys; but she dared not go in. She passed by and went to her own room.

This was, in fact, Esther Clark's besetting fault. Her mother had often spoken of it, and it had often proved a source of shame and mortification to her. Her mother had taken many opportunities, such as a quiet

Sabbath evening, or when they were sitting alone and sewing, or when they were walking together at sunset and her mind was teachable and subdued, to point out its true nature; how it grew out of a selfish heart; how it led to disobedience and a careless disregard of the comfort of others; how unfaithful and untrusty it made her. Indeed, Esther often had occasion to see in how many evils she had got entangled, and into how many weaknesses and how much remissness she had been led, just by that one little fault, "I did not think." I mean it looks little on paper, it appears like a very small sentence, "*I did not think*;" but when we stop and look at the consequences of not thinking, we find it a very grave and serious thing.

As Esther had grown older, she had at times seriously set about improving herself. She treasured up in her memory all her mother's instructions, and thought them over and over. An improvement for a time had been visible in her conduct. She was not so

often remiss, nor did she so often palliate her negligence and forgetfulness by the old excuse. Esther for a time did seem to be really trying to amend; but, of late, old habits had been gradually regaining power over her. On several little occasions, she had done things which she ought not to have done, and left undone things which she ought to have done: and all the excuse she could plead was, "*I did not think.*"

In the incident just described, how very, very insufficient did this excuse appear to her aunt, to herself, and even to Nancy! and then what results might flow from her not thinking! As Esther went into her chamber and shut the door, throwing herself on the bed, she sobbed out,

"Oh, if the medicine has come too late! and oh, if Ellen should die because it did not come in time, should not I be the means of her death!" And Esther hid her face in the pillow, with feelings that nobody could envy.

Poor Esther was learning a bitter lesson.

"This is indeed a lesson that I shall not soon forget," thought she. "I shall never get over it, if Ellen dies!" She tossed about on the bed a long while, with severe self-reproaches and without a ray of comfort.

After some time, she got up and opened the door, and listened if she could hear any sound from the sick chamber. Every thing was still. Esther thought it was dreadfully still. She could not even hear Nancy moving about in any part of the house.

She was not able to bear it any longer, and she crept down into a closet next her mother's chamber, and held her ear closely against the wall to listen for some sound; but she heard not so much as a whisper. It was still as death. Her heart was full of violent emotions.

"The baby must be dead! Yes, my dear Ellen must be dead, and they will not tell me of it! They will say I caused her death, and I shall die too!"

In agony, Esther ran back to her room.

"I cannot stay here!" she cried aloud, "I am sure I can bear it no longer! What shall I do? Where shall I go?"

She ran down into the kitchen.

"Nancy," she cried, with streaming eyes, "is the baby dead!"

"Dead! Why, no, indeed! she's better, but they want to keep every thing as still as can be. So move about as still as a mouse, and cry some other time."

Nancy said this in a kind tone, but it could not stay Esther's tears. She sat down by the stove, and sobbed as if her heart would break.

Alfred and John did not come home from school at noon. Aunt Allen invited them to take dinner with her. Mr. Clark was also away. Very pressing business called him to a neighbouring town that day. Esther was thankful for it, for she thought she could not bear to have her father told of her negligence, then at least; not until she could know how it would turn out with the baby. Her mother did not come down, but took a cup of tea in the sick chamber;

so that nobody was at the dinner table but herself and Aunt Jane. Esther had dried her eyes, washed her face, and combed her hair; but she had very little heart to eat. Several times she tried to ask about Ellen, and every time the words seemed to refuse to come out. At last she asked, "What do you think of the baby, Aunt Jane?"

"We must hope for the best, my dear; but the crisis is not passed yet."

"Crisis not passed yet!" repeated Esther to herself: "Crisis!" She knew in general what the word was, but yet she was puzzled a little about Ellen's crisis. What did it exactly mean? Esther would have given any thing to know. She wished Aunt Jane would explain. She wanted to ask, but was afraid: and so she kept still.

In the afternoon, some of her companions came in; but, though they stayed some time and seemed to try to divert her, her head ached, and she was not sorry when they took leave.

At night Esther retired earlier than usual. She had no lessons to learn, because it was vacation. She had no heart to play checkers with Alfred. She could not read, because her eyes were weak. Aunt Jane and her mother were in the sick-room, from which the children were for the present excluded.

Esther took her lamp and went up-stairs. Her reflections were certainly by no means pleasant, but they were as pleasant as any thing that could be had that night.

"Oh," she sighed, after shutting her door; "I hoped sometimes that I was improving, but I have gone back again, just where I used to be. Mother and Aunt Jane will never think of trusting me again after this. Nobody will trust me! I shall never, never improve. I shall only be a piece of lumber in the house, useful to nobody—only in the way! Just think of those monkeys making me forget Ellen and my errand! 'Tis not as though I had never seen monkeys before. I have seen them often, but '*I did not think.*'

"There it is again! saying it to myself, as if it were an excuse. 'Did not think!' but I ought to think. I am in duty bound to think. It is reasonable to think. It is part of my nature to think. If I had not a soul, it would be excuse enough that I did not think. Suppose father should not get us any thing to eat, no flour, no meal, no potatoes, and then say, 'He did not think.' Suppose mother should neglect us, and then excuse herself by saying, 'She did not think.' Suppose Nancy, every now and then, should fail to get my breakfast, and say, 'She did not think.' I am sure the family would be turned upside down. What a strange plight we should be in! Sometimes nothing in the house to eat—sometimes nothing cooked—sometimes nothing for us children to put on. Would it not be shameful? Who would think any thing of such an excuse for such neglect? How wrong, how unfaithful would they be! That is plain enough. Well now, is it not just as bad for me to neglect what *I* have to do, and

say, 'I did not think'? I am sure it may lead to consequences bad enough."

Thus did Esther reason, as she sat leaning her head upon her hand; and everybody will say it is pretty good reasoning.

"Suppose I had been the means of taking away Ellen's life?" The idea was dreadful, and Esther shuddered.

"I wish I was grown up!" she at last cried aloud, in an angry tone, "then I should get rid of such troubles."

Young people, I know, are sometimes apt, when they are smarting under the consequences of their faults, to wish they were anybody or any thing but themselves. I once heard a young lady wish she were a toad, because she would not then have to think and to repent. Such wishes are not only fruitless, but they are sinful,—extremely sinful. God has made you what you are, and all the wishing in the world cannot unmake you. God has placed you where you are, and it is setting yourself against his authority to desire to be otherwise

than what his will determines for you. Besides, is any one quite sure of escaping her troubles by getting older? It is very certain that, unless you try to forsake sin and amend your ways while you are young, which is the easiest time for improvement, you will find it very difficult to do so when you grow up; and if you grow up with bad habits and a bad heart, you will find abundant pain and trouble.

In wishing she was grown up, Esther would not have mended her condition much, unless she meant at the same time to take vigorous measures towards self-improvement while a child. If thoughtlessness was no excuse for a neglect of duty in a child, how much worse does it appear in a grown-up person! This conclusion Esther herself had reasoned out pretty clearly.

It was a great while before she began to undress herself, or think of going to bed. Before doing so, she opened a beautiful Bible, which her father had given her on her last birthday,

and began to turn over the leaves, as if she was searching for some particular passages. To do Esther justice, we must say that she seldom retired without reading the Scriptures and prayer. She had been in this good habit from the time when she was a very little girl, although it is to be feared her heart was not always in the exercises. But it is a most excellent and important habit, and a habit which God will bless for good.

She found that verse, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." They are the blessed Saviour's words, and Esther read them over and over again. How kind and gracious the invitation appeared to her! As she pondered upon the expression, the bitterness of her spirit seemed to give way, and her heart grew mellow and humble.

"I am sure I am heavy laden," thought she; "why am I not just such a one as the Saviour meant? He certainly meant children as well as those who are grown up,

and he will hear them full as quickly. This verse seems to fit my case. It never seemed so before, but it does now. I feel just as it says."

Esther then kneeled down to pray, and the tears flowed fast.

How wonderful and gracious is it, that we have an Almighty Friend, who can help us in our infirmities, who can forgive our sins, who can speak peace to our troubled hearts, and who can help us—really and truly help us—to amend our ways. No earthly father or mother can do this for us, much and dearly as they may love us; but Jesus Christ, our Almighty Friend, can do it.

Oh! that every child would really and truly go to that Friend. I am sure they are often troubled. They often smart under the consequences of doing wrong; they are often heavy-laden with sin, and hardly know which way to turn. They really wish to do better, but somehow sin gets the upper hand. Ah, my dear children, it is Jesus Christ, and only Jesus Christ, who can help you out of diffi-

culties like these. He alone can wipe the stains of sin from your heart. He alone can clear off your clouds by the light of his countenance, and he can help your heart, your hands, your feet, your eyes and your mouth to do right.

Will you not seek him?

The next morning, when Esther came down and tapped at her mother's door, it was evident that she had been suffering, although she then looked calm and subdued.

"How is Ellen, mother?" were her first words, going on tip-toe towards the bed.

"A little more comfortable, I hope," answered her mother,—"only a very little!"

"But, mother, is the danger past?"

"We cannot tell yet; she must be kept as quiet as possible; but, Esther, my daughter, you are not well. You look pale this morning," said Mrs. Clark, looking into Esther's face.

"Pretty well, mother," answered she, in a

low tone. "If I am sick, mother, it is more in here, than any outside sickness," pointing to her bosom.

Mrs. Clark understood the case.

"Well, my dear," said she, tenderly parting her hair, "I am afraid you cannot cure yourself, neither can your father or mother cure you, but there is one who can. He is the Friend and the Saviour of just such frail, backsliding creatures as we are."

"And that is just what I am, mother," answered Esther,—"sliding back continually. I just go a little ways, thinking I am getting along very well, when back I go again, and am worse than ever! I am just like the Pilgrim."

"There is Jesus, putting out his hand to help you up again. You remember the hymn, Esther,

> Oh, help us, Lord! each hour of need
> Thy heavenly succour give;
> Keep us in thought, and word, and deed,
> Each hour on earth we live."

This little talk, carried on in a whisper, was now broken in upon by Nancy, who came to say that breakfast was ready.

What the effect of Esther's sufferings would be, remained to be seen. Would they be for her lasting good? Or would they pass away like the morning cloud and the early dew, making her neither wiser nor better?

Esther was quite thoughtful for the next few days; and as soon as the baby was pronounced to be essentially better, her mother wanted her to go to Marysville to spend the remainder of the vacation. She was at first loath to leave little Ellen, who, as she grew better, was fonder than ever of her sister; but Mrs. Clark decided that, on some accounts, it was better for her to go, and she set out with her father the next pleasant day.

Ten days passed off. The vacation was over, and so was Esther's visit. How delighted

was she to get back again! And what a shouting from John and Alfred when she was fairly in the house! How little Ellen, who had already begun to recover the roses on her cheeks, clapped her hands and jumped into her sister's arms!

"I have had a delightful time, mother," cried Esther; "but it is still delightful to get home again. There is no place like home. I am really glad to come back;" and from want of some other way of giving vent to her feelings, she began to kiss them all over again.

Esther soon fell into her usual round of duty. School began. Old schoolmates gathered around her. New books were to be bought, and new lessons were to be studied, and she soon had enough to do, both at school and at home.

It was the fourth day of school. Esther arose bright and early, and as she drew back the curtain of her chamber window, she thought it was the fairest sky that she ever saw.

"I am glad I woke up in such good season,"

thought she; "I do believe I am up before Nancy; because I have begun school with the resolution to do the best I can this term. I mean to try and recite every lesson perfectly, and keep all the rules. I have been very strict with myself so far—only three days, to be sure—and a good many girls begin well, who do not hold out. If I can only *be thoughtful.* There's where the shoe pinches. If I can only be *thoughtful, mindful,*—then, there would be hope that things might go right."

With that Esther sat down, opened her Bible, and spent a little time in seeking the favour and help of her heavenly Friend. She then opened the window, and went down-stairs to study a little before breakfast.

Household duties went on regularly and busily until nearly half-past eight. Esther always made her own bed, and put her chamber in order, before she went to school. Her mother taught her to keep it very tidy, and the only hindrance she ever found in doing it was her thoughtlessness; and a sad hin-

drance it used to be. Her mother sometimes had been afraid she would never be worth any thing, not even so much as to keep her chamber neat, and all because—she "didn't think." One shoe would be behind a trunk, another on the table; her cap might be under the bed, while her brush and comb were left lying across the open drawer of her dressing-table.

"My child, how came this here, and that there? Esther, why did you not put your things away?" her mother was apt often to ask with a distressed tone; and what was Esther's excuse but "Oh, I didn't think!" This is the way, I say, it used to be: but on the morning of which we now speak, every thing was put in place as if some *thinking* body had fixed them, and it was now nearly half-past eight. Esther was in her mother's chamber. "Time wanes: run and get me a pitcher of water, and then get ready for school," said her mother, who was at the wash-stand.

"Yes, mother," cried she briskly, seizing the pitcher and skipping off.

"Here you are!" shouted Alfred, as she came racing into the kitchen. "If mother thinks my cold is too bad to go out, I will have some fun in the house, I guess." So he rushed by Nancy's tub, turning it bottom upwards, got the checker-board, set the men in order, and begged Nancy to stop a minute, just to see in what "a General Washington style he could beat Esther."

"Beat me!" cried Esther, coming back with her pitcher. "Beat me! I have only to say as Julius Cæsar did, 'I came, I saw, I conquered!' but I cannot stop now."

"Yes. That is the way Esther wants to get off! and hear her! She is afraid to meet me. Come, Esther, Nancy wants to see us. You are afraid to try. The men are all set. Come! come! It will not take me long to sweep your men off the board. I am a General Washington at this game."

Esther was teased and vexed by her bro-

ther's words. Will she stop? Her mother is waiting for the water, and school-time is approaching as fast as the clock can tick. Two claims are urged as loud as can be. Will she think?

But there is the checker-board, and Alfred has challenged her.

Esther stops: the pitcher is placed on the floor.

See! they engage! They have got into the game. Can it be that Esther is sliding back again?

"Oh," cried Esther, suddenly starting up, "I did not think!"

"No! I cannot take you!" shouted Alfred.

"It was not that!" cried Esther. "Mother is waiting for the water, and it is high time to make ready for school. I cannot stop! indeed I cannot. I did not think! But now that I do think, I must be off."

"Ho! ho!" cried Alfred. "A pretty thing for Julius Cæsar to take to his heels in that way! You shall not go! It is a downright

coward that runs away. You saw my plan. Come! we are just in the cream of the game."

"Cream or no cream, coward or no coward, I must go," answered Esther, resolutely. "I am so glad I thought in time," taking up her pitcher and marching off.

"Nancy, that is just Esther's way; it is only because I am going to beat her. In three moves she would be done up. Julius Cæsar cannot stand General Washington's fire."

Esther was a little provoked with Alfred, but she was gone. Esther was only sorry that she stopped at all; for she really had no time for play; "but I am so thankful I thought in time," she said aloud,—"so thankful!"

No matter what Alfred accused her of, no matter what Nancy thought, as long as Esther was trying to do right. They could not look into her heart. They did not witness her struggles. Esther was panting for breath as she set the pitcher of water by her mother's wash-stand.

"Esther,"—began her mother, who looked as if she had been waiting,—

"Please do not say a word, mother," cried she; "I am in fault. I almost did not think. I stopped in the kitchen with Alfred, when I had no right to do it; but, mother, I did think in time, and the moment I thought, I ran as fast as I could. Oh! I am so glad."

Mrs. Clark was also glad. There is nothing which delights the heart of any mother so much as seeing her children in earnest to improve; making improvement a real business; not something to be done at odd times; but something to be daily and constantly sought after.

Perhaps some may think this a very little thing. What harm could there be in Esther's stopping to play a minute? But such persons forget that the great work of life is made up of a great number of little things. It is through the influence of little things that we are daily improving or going backward. Little things, in fact, become great things, when we consider

their relations to our character, because they help so much to form it.

Most of your duties are what you might call little duties, but they are vastly important to you and to those around you. They may even be no more than rocking the cradle, or teaching your sister her letters, or hemming some towels for your mother, or a pocket handkerchief for your father, or washing up the cups in the morning; and yet do you not see how fidelity and thoughtfulness in each of these would tend to make you a useful and happy child?

THE spring gradually advanced; the skies became bluer, the winds softer, and everywhere the voice of the grass was heard singing its curious song,

"Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere,
By the dusty road-side,
On the sunny hill-side,
Close by the noisy brook,
In every shady nook,
I come creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, smiling everywhere,
All round the open door
Where sit the aged poor,
Here where the children play
In the bright and merry May,
I come creeping, creeping everywhere."

Esther and her brothers were glad for the creeping, smiling, new grass, and for all the pleasant and beautiful things which the spring brought with it. They watched the swelling buds; and the heart's-ease and crocusses as they put forth their beautiful flowers. The garden was partly made, and the seeds were assorted for planting; and then, as the roads became dry, they began to take their old walks into the country.

It was towards the last of May, when Esther and her brothers were going to pay a long promised visit to Miss Molly, a kind old lady, who lived two miles from their house, and who was always pleased when the children came to see her. Esther had been many times to carry her tracts and good books, which her mother

obtained for her. Sometimes she took her a warm new loaf of gingerbread or other cake, and sometimes some yarn to knit stockings for her mother. Esther knew Miss Molly very well, and as she thought a good deal of Esther, Esther liked to go there. The boys had never been but once, but Esther had been promising to take them, and one pleasant Wednesday afternoon their mother gave them leave to go.

"Esther," said she, "I put Alfred and John under your care. See that they do no mischief, and do not let them be troublesome to Miss Molly. Here is a basket of apples for her: they will be a great rarity at this season. See to the boys."

Esther said she would, and the boys added, "Why, mother, we will behave well enough. We know how, I am sure."

"I dare say," answered Mrs. Clark, "but I am afraid you will not always think."

"Oh," said Ellen to herself, "they never were so bad as I have been about that. They must think."

Away they went,—Esther, Alfred and John, each taking turns to carry the basket of apples. When they reached what Esther called "the half-way house," (a flat broad stone by the brook,) they all sat down, and while resting, she told them a story about that brook, which her mother once told her. After it was done, Alfred spoke for another; but John wanted to go on, and as their mother charged them to be back in good season, they concluded to follow John.

At length Miss Molly's house came in sight. It was a small one-story house, which she had earned and kept in good repair by her needle. In one half of it lived a man and his wife, in the other were Miss Molly and Miss Dolly. They were sisters: and had lived together happily for nearly sixty years, when Miss Dolly died, to the great affliction of her sister.

"But the Lord is my helper," Molly used to say. "Dolly has only gone home first. She will be there to bid me welcome."

For a time, people thought Miss Molly

would soon follow, so great was her grief; but at last it became less violent, and she began to look cheerful again. Lately she had lost some of her earnings, from the failure of a gentleman who kept them for her: but the news did not disturb her much: "The greater part of my treasures are laid up, I trust," said she, "where neither moth nor rust corrupts, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. My wants here are few, and will not last long. I shall not worry. If I lack, the Lord will provide."

Esther somehow or other always liked to hear Miss Molly talk. She used to sit by her side, and with great interest hear the old lady tell what happened when she was a girl. "Why, mother, it is as good as reading a Sunday-school book," she often said.

They soon reached the door. Esther opened it and went in. There sat Miss Molly in her low rocking-chair, with a clean mob-cap on, and a white muslin kerchief plaited over her shoulders, knitting, with a large book opened

on a little stand before her, every now and then reading,—every now and then knitting. It was "Fox's Book of the Martyrs," a book of which Miss Molly was never tired.

"Here we are! We have come to see you a little while!" exclaimed John, bursting somewhat noisily into the room, which Esther did not think very becoming.

"I want to see your hen!" cried Alfred, planting himself before her.

"We have brought you a few apples," said Esther, modestly. "How do you do, Miss Molly?"

"God bless you, my dears," said the old woman, eying each by turns through her spectacles—"a little rheumatic. I thank you. There's his father right out," said she, taking Alfred by the hand, "and what is your name? —you are your father's own child."

"Alfred Clark—but I want to see your hen."

"My hen!" answered the old lady; "how came you to suppose that an old woman that can hardly hobble about, kept a hen?"

"Esther told us. She said it was a beauty. She said somebody sent it to comfort you after you lost some of your money. Does she? Does the hen comfort you?"

"I do not know but she does. She is a good hen. She comes every morning under this window to get her breakfast. Sometimes she perches on the window. Sometimes she strays off with neighbour Jones's hens, but always comes back at night. She is setting now. I shall have some little chickens by and by."

The children sat down and rested themselves, and ate their oranges, which uncle Joseph had left for them in the morning—giving one to Miss Molly, and hearing her talk. Then the boys wanted to go and look about.

"Take them about," said Miss Molly to Esther; "they would like to go out in the barn, maybe." Then she whispered to Esther, "You know where Biddy is setting. See that the boys are careful, that's a good girl."

Esther answered, "Oh, yes," and the three went out. She kept a very watchful eye over her brothers, lest they might do what they ought not to do. On going into the barn, she showed them where Biddy's nest was, and how Biddy loved her nest, how many eggs she had, and how they must not on any account go near her or disturb her.

"There, I have showed it to you," said Esther, "now do not touch it;" and she went on seriously to impress upon their minds not to go near it again, lest they should disturb the old hen.

"We won't! We won't! We won't!" shouted the boys.

After looking all around, Esther proposed going in, but the boys did not want to go just then. "You go," said Alfred; "we will play out here a little while."

"If you will promise not to do any thing that you ought not to do, nor go near Biddy's nest, nor any thing of that sort,"—said Esther.

"We certainly will not," promised Alfred.

"Then I will go and sit with Miss Molly awhile"—and she went back into the house.

I do not know how long she sat, but they were talking as pleasantly as could be, and Esther was glad that the boys were having a good time by themselves, when John lifted the latch as softly as could be and whispered to Esther. She started up and ran to the door. He beckoned her out, looking much frightened.

"What is the matter?" she asked anxiously. "Has Alfred hurt himself?"

"Worse than that," said John, still in a whisper; "come and see."

Esther followed him into the barn.

Lo! there sat Alfred on the round of a ladder, his shoes besmeared with the whites and yolks of eggs.

"What has happened? What does it mean?" cried Esther, turning pale.

"Oh, I did not think!" exclaimed Alfred, beginning to cry.

"Where did the eggs come from?" cried Esther.

"It's Biddy's eggs," said John. "Alfred jumped into the nest without thinking."

"Oh!" exclaimed Esther, "can it be poor Biddy's nest! What shall we do? what will Miss Molly say? Oh, did I not caution you again and again?"

"I did not think," said Alfred, sobbing.

"Killed Miss Molly's whole brood of chickens!" exclaimed Esther.

"I did not think," replied Alfred.

"Did not think!" cried Esther. "Well, Alfred, you have robbed Miss Molly of a fortune. She meant to sell her chickens."

"What shall I do? I did not think," again blubbered Alfred.

"Did not think!" repeated Esther; "but have you any excuse for not thinking? Did I not say, over and over again, how careful you must be? Did I not particularly tell you?"

"You did, I am sure, Esther," answered John.

"Yes, you did; but I did not think."

"It is no excuse at all," said Esther.

"You see that it is not. You know you could have thought, and that you ought to have thought. You were told to think. Oh, dear! how can I tell Miss Molly? And what will poor Biddy think when she comes home? how she will feel!" And as Esther looked over the crib into her nest, she felt ready to cry. "It is very bad," sighed she, "very bad, indeed."

"You have spoiled our fun, Alfred," said John.

"Our visit is certainly spoiled," said Esther, "and I am sure I do not know what to do. We ought to pay Miss Molly for the eggs; but what will poor Biddy do?"

They all stood greatly perplexed.

At last they heard footsteps coming that way, and on turning around, Miss Molly was seen approaching the barn.

"Oh, Miss Molly!" cried Esther, "something very bad has happened."

Alfred in the mean while ran off and hid himself behind an old cart-wheel; and Esther began to tell about it.

Miss Molly could not help looking very sorry, though she tried also to comfort the children.

"I did not mean to,"—cried Alfred from his hiding-place,—"I did not mean to, I did not think."

"Well," said Miss Molly, "we cannot expect much from boys that do not think."

Alfred twinged, and so did Esther, for she knew there never was a truer saying.

Miss Molly climbed over to the nest, and carefully took up the broken shells. Out of eleven eggs only three were left whole.

Esther felt just like crying over it, and so did John. "How bad it is to be thoughtless," she said again and again. "What evils it brings!"

Miss Molly cleared the nest as well as she could for poor Biddy; but it was a very sorry-looking nest for her to come back to.

After that, they all came into the house. Alfred washed his shoes, and then they put on their things to go home.

"I am very sorry for what has happened," said Esther as they took leave. "I shall tell mother of it. I am afraid you will not want us to come again."

"I know you are sorry, Esther," said Miss Molly, kindly, "and I am sorry your visit has been broken up in this way. You must come and see Biddy and me again. I want John to come also; and as soon as Alfred has learned to think, I shall be glad to see him again. It does not do for thoughtless boys to come to visit a poor, old woman like me."

Alfred looked very much ashamed.

When they got home, it was all related to their parents, who felt very sorry for poor Miss Molly's loss, and for the careless conduct of their son.

"Alfred must pay for the mischief he has done," said his father.

"Out of my own money, father?" asked Alfred, looking as if that would not suit him at all.

"Certainly, my son."

"It will take all I have, maybe, and I am saving it all for the Fourth of July. You know the Temperance celebration, father."

"That cannot be helped. You have injured Miss Molly's property, and in justice you must pay her for it."

"Must he pay her for the eggs, or for the chickens that would have come from them?" said John; "for chickens are worth more than eggs."

"I did not kill any chickens,—I only broke some eggs, I am sure!" exclaimed Alfred. "Do not make it worse than it is."

"But they would have been chickens," said John.

"Oh, father, that would take all I have got, and more too," cried Alfred. "Must I pay for eggs, or chickens?"

"'*Not thinking*' costs something," thought Esther.

"Father, I shall not have any thing for the Fourth!" cried Alfred again. "Must I take my all?"

"Eggs in the market are only a cent a piece," said Mrs. Clark; "but it is clear, that Biddy's eggs are worth more to Miss Molly, because in a few days they would have been chickens, and a chicken is worth more than an egg. On the other hand, Alfred should not pay the worth of chickens two or three or four weeks old, because he has nothing to do with the cost of keeping them. That is Miss Molly's business."

"Then I shall have only to pay for chickens just hatched!" exclaimed Alfred, brightening up. "Pooh! who would give much for a little chicken? Father, would the market price be much?"

"Three cents, perhaps," answered Mr. Clark.

"Twenty-four cents!" shouted Alfred. "Well, I can pay that, I suppose, for I have got as many as eighty-one or two cents, and so I shall have something left even after paying the damage. It is too bad to lose that,

though, and all for nothing! I might have thought."

Twenty-four cents was agreed upon as the damage, which Alfred took from his money saved and earned, and carried it up to Miss Molly. Alfred grudged that, though he was thankful to get off so well. He could not, however, help muttering every now and then as he jogged along, "If I only had thought a little!"

Ah, yes! Not thinking costs something. Indeed, sometimes it costs a great deal.

The affair, which, under some circumstances, might have passed by without making any moral impression, taught another serious lesson to Esther, for her mind was open now, and she thought a great deal of events as they happened. She sought out the lessons to be learned from them, and pondered them in her heart and remembered them.

"How my mother must have borne with me!" she said to herself. "I was angry with Alfred for 'not thinking' this once, and yet

how many, many times have I been just so thoughtless, when my mother has charged me to think, or bade me be careful! How long she has borne with me! How unfaithful and how untrustworthy I must have seemed to her! I wonder my mother depended upon me at all. How many times must I have grieved her, just as Alfred did me!"

Esther sighed as she saw herself reflected in her brother's conduct. She saw, too, how mean and pitiful an excuse "not thinking" is,—that, in truth, it was no excuse at all.

Esther laid up all these experiences, and by the light of them tried to improve more and more, and she went the right way to work. Day by day, and almost hour by hour, she sought God's grace to guide her and keep her from all folly and all sin.

THREE years passed away, and Esther Clark was fourteen years old. She has grown tall. Her hair, which used to curl on her neck when

she was younger, is now plainly parted on her forehead and twisted up in a comb behind. There is a bright, cheerful expression upon her face, and much meaning in her clear blue eye, as if she thought and observed far more than she used to do. Has her improvement kept pace with her years? She is called a pretty good scholar, and writes very interesting compositions, as the girls say. But how is it with her character? Has that improved? Does her mother take comfort in her? Do her brothers and sisters look up to her, as their eldest sister, with respect and love? And do they take her advice, and is her example safe to follow? All this depends, I suppose, upon whether she still thinks or not. She cannot be useful, influential, rational, or reasonable, unless she thinks. I hope she does.

One afternoon, when Esther came home from school, she found a carriage at the door; and upon going in, the family were all astir in an unusual manner.

"Your grandmother is very ill, and your

mother is sent for in haste," said Mr. Clark. "Perhaps you had better go up-stairs and help her to get ready."

Esther ran up-stairs, and found her mother much agitated by the unexpected summons.

"I am glad you have come, Esther," said she. "I want to give you some directions, for I must leave the care of every thing to you. I wish Aunt Jane was here, but she is not. I wish Nancy was here. I do not know how you can get along with Hannah. She cannot cook."

"Never mind, mother. Do not think about us," answered Esther, cheerfully. "We will do the best we can."

"You have never been left with any care, my dear," said her mother, anxiously; "and your father is so unwell too, you must see to his wants, Esther. The ironing comes to-morrow. I wonder if the boys"——

"Dear mother," interrupted Esther, "please do not be troubled. We can get along. I know we can. I will try my best. Trust us

for once, and when you are gone, do not worry about us. Give all your time to poor grandmother." And she began to help her mother pack away a few articles in the portmanteau.

"I am sure I have a great deal to say," said Mrs. Clark, "for I cannot tell how long it may be before I shall come back. There is some jelly for poor Mrs. Hyde: can you think to carry it down to her, Esther? And Jessie Lynn was coming day after to-morrow to cut out the boys' clothes: can you stop in and ask her to put it off? And"——

"I think you had better set out as soon as you can," said Mr. Clark, coming into the chamber; "you have a long ride before you, and it will be a dark night. Better get over as much of the ground as possible before dark."

"I suppose so, but it seems to me I have a great many things to say to Esther. She has never been left with such a charge before, with neither aunt Jane or Nancy here. But it often happens just so."

"Never mind," said her husband; "it will give us an opportunity to see what Esther is worth,"—looking at her with a confiding expression.

Esther felt afraid in her heart that she was not worth much.

Presently the boys and Ellen came with a great noise into the house.

"Who is going away?" shouted John.

"It is grandfather's horse! Who's come?" cried Alfred.

"Oh, may I go?" asked Ellen.

They saw a stranger in the sitting-room, so they all ran up into their mother's chamber, and soon learned what was going on.

The sad news sobered them; for they loved their grandmother dearly.

Mrs. Clark was soon ready. The children sent many kind messages to her, and repeated over and over again how they hoped she would get well.

"You must be good children," said Mrs. Clark; "and when your father is away, mind

what Esther says. I have put all household matters in Esther's charge. Do not give her any trouble."

The boys promised well. Ellen stood up in a chair, looking at the horse and carriage. "Mother, I want to go too," at last she said; "I do not want to be left."

Esther whispered something in her ear, and then led her down-stairs to see their mother off.

Mrs. Clark had taken a cup of tea. The table was now set, and Esther began to busy herself in several little matters. The evening she had promised to spend with Louisa Emery, her intimate friend and companion. They often prepared their French lessons together, sometimes Louisa coming to Esther, sometimes Esther going to Louisa. The lesson was unusually difficult, and they had determined to study it together. Both loved their books, and both wished above all things to have perfect recitations.

After supper, when the lamps were brought

in, and while the boys were parching corn in the kitchen, Esther thought she would take her book and go to the Emery's. Coming into the parlour, she found her father alone, leaning back in a rocking-chair, looking, as she thought, quite dismally.

"Here is the paper, father," said she.

"You forget, my dear, that I cannot read by candle-light. The doctor will not allow it. Your mother served me for eyes."

"Why, father, I did not know they were so bad."

"Very likely, my dear. I do not speak of them often, except to your mother."

"But, father, do you not ever read at all in the evenings? You always used to."

"It is, I think, six weeks or more."

And Esther now remembered that every evening, when she went down to her mother's chamber, where she usually studied when the weather was cool, her mother was reading aloud in the parlour.

Esther went out. As she reached out her

hand to take down her bonnet, she stopped. She stopped and *thought*. "Father is sick. Father is alone. He feels anxious, I dare say, about mother's riding so in the night, and about grandmother's sickness." Esther was really thinking. "Now cannot I go in and read to him and keep him company? I can get my French lesson to-morrow morning. It would be easier and pleasanter to learn it with Louisa,—but here is poor father. It is not often I have such a chance to comfort him—to be really useful to him. I am sure I ought to be glad of such a chance, and improve it. I will run over and tell Louisa, and then come home and stay."

Esther went back into the parlour, and, stepping up behind his chair, she said, "Father, I will read the paper to you in a few minutes. I will be back, and read to you all the evening, if you wish it. I love to read aloud, and mother says she thinks I read quite understandingly."

"Thank you, my dear," answered her fa-

ther, "it would certainly gratify me. But how is it about your lessons?"

"I have only one to learn, and that I can learn to-morrow morning. I will be back in a few moments."

Esther again went out. She skipped out at the side door, and went to excuse herself to Louisa, and then skipped back again in a very short time.

She quickly re-appeared in the parlour, sat down by her father's side, determined to devote the evening to making him happy.

He wrote to his wife, many days afterwards, "Our dear daughter's thoughtful kindness relieves the tediousness of my evenings. She sits and and reads to me, and talks to me every evening, when nobody is in. She reads well. I begin to value her more than ever. She certainly does well. She thinks of every thing to be done."

This was high praise, and it was deserved. How many, many children do not *think* of trying to do any thing, especially for the comfort

or enjoyment of their parents! Yet they expect their fathers and mothers to be always striving to please them. Think, children, how much you owe your parents for all their care and kindness towards you. It is a debt of gratitude which you can really never pay, but which you can, in some measure, requite by an ever-thoughtful attention to their comfort and happiness.

The next morning after her mother's departure Esther arose earlier than usual, because there were more duties to engage her time, and she would not on any account cut short, or give up, her daily communion with her God and Saviour. Esther began to see more meaning in the Bible than she used to see. She began to feel that much of it was written for her, because it seemed to meet her case. She loved to read about the Saviour, and her mother bade her observe how his whole life was spent for the good of others,—how thoughtful and earnest he was to do good wherever he went. Esther wept, and wished she could go

and do likewise; and, as she thought about it, and desired it, and prayed for it, her young heart gradually became moulded into his image.

After Esther had finished her prayer for heavenly grace, she sat down and tried to think of all the special things her mother desired her to do. There was the jelly to be carried to the sick woman, the tailoress to be put off, her mother's subscription to the Sunday-school society to be taken to Miss Green, and two dollars to be paid for some sewing done. "These must all be borne in mind," said Esther. "This is Wednesday, and instead of going to Sacker Brook with Louisa and the girls, I will do these very things."

After studying her lesson, she went down into the kitchen to see if Hannah needed any help about getting breakfast ready; then she went up to wash and dress Ellen, and help her learn the little spelling lesson which her mother was in the habit of teaching her while Ellen was dressing, and then she went to her own lessons.

It happened that as Esther was on her way to school that morning, Emily Shaw joined her, exclaiming in a hurried whisper, "Oh, Esther Clark, I am as wretched as can be! I have not slept a wink all night! Some dreadful thing has happened to me."

Esther was frightened. "What is the matter? Tell me! Quick, Emily! Is anybody sick at your house, or dead?"

"Dear me! worse than that: but do not look so frightened. You are actually pale. Any thing but what it is."

At that moment a shouting was heard behind them, and Louisa's voice called, "Girls! Esther! Emily!"

"There! I cannot tell you now: but I want to tell you—just for you to give me a clue how to get out—I am in a web of difficulties. I will tell you this afternoon."

Louisa joined them, and they all went into the school-room together. Esther could not help wondering what it could be. She saw it was something quite serious, for Emily could

hardly keep still in school; her desk was only two or three yards from Esther's, and her restlessness could not but have been remarked by all around. Besides, her lessons were badly prepared. In her recitations she seemed absent.

Esther thought of it several times, but at recess there was no opportunity to explain, and she went home before the school closed. Esther told Louisa she could not go with the party to the brook, so that all opportunity of finding out poor Emily's difficulty seemed cut off.

When afternoon came, Esther found some new books on the table, which she was sorely tempted to read.

"Here!" exclaimed Alfred, "Joe lent them to me. You must read them quick, for he says he always promised you the first reading, and several of the boys are waiting for them. This is Wednesday. Take them right up."

"Ah, no!" Esther thought; so she could not follow Alfred's advice.

"I have some errands to do first," said she; "then I will do what I can."

"Errands! No matter about the errands. Mother has gone, and what I heard her tell you to do can just as well be done one time as another," said Alfred.

"I do not know how you can say that," replied Esther.

"Why, just to carry an old woman some jelly and pay a bill! The old woman will be just as glad of the jelly to-morrow, or a day or two hence; and as for paying the bill, I did not know there was any fixed time for paying bills."

"Bills must be paid when they are due; Alfred, do you not know that?" asked Esther, with some appearance of authority.

"Well, I say, as you cannot have these books but ever so short a time, you had better take this afternoon for reading them; else I shall have to carry them off before you have looked at them." Alfred was provoked with his sister that she made no answer, and he went off.

Esther now began to dress Ellen. She then

took her mother's purse, put the jar of jelly in a napkin, and the two sisters set out together.

They first called on the tailoress. Esther did her errand. "I am very glad to know it in season," said she, "because there is somebody else who wants to engage me for the day on which I promised to help your mother, and now I will send word I can come before she engages anybody else. I am glad to know it in season."

"And I am glad I did not put it off," thought Esther; "the tailoress would have lost that day, perhaps."

"Where next?" asked Ellen.

"To poor sick Mrs. Hyde," answered Esther. They now turned off from the Main street, and proceeded along the lanes, until they came to a large old house inhabited by three or four families. "This is where Mrs. Hyde lives," said Esther, going in without knocking, and ascending the stairs. She tapped gently at the left-hand door.

"Come in," said a feeble voice.

"Dear children!" cried poor Mrs. Hyde, reaching her thin, pale hand towards them, from the chair in which she sat,—"I am thankful to see your fresh faces."

Esther took her hand, and told her that her mother sent her some more calves-foot jelly, which she then unwrapped and put into the sick woman's lap.

"That is beautiful!" she said in a whisper. "I have not had any for many a day: and my appetite is so poor, I have eaten nothing for two days or more. I can relish this, I know I can, and maybe it will restore my appetite."

Esther told her about her mother's going, and how she took her mother's place. "Well, dear, now please hand me that spoon on the table. I want to taste my jelly. The very smell of it is nourishing."

Certainly it was worth coming there to see how the sick woman relished her jelly. "Just what I was longing for," said she, taking a spoonful or two, and looking gratefully into Esther's face.

"I am thankful I did not put this off," thought Esther, with gladness of heart.

After a little while they went away.

"Did she not like it?" said Ellen. "How pleased she looked!"

"There are not many things that sick people can eat, mother says; and when they do get any thing that they relish, it tastes very good."

"I am glad we brought it to her," said Ellen; "how she thanked us! She kept thanking us and thanking us."

"After all, it shows what little things please sick people," said Esther. "Mother says, a little, just at the right time, goes for a great deal to them."

"Where next?" asked Ellen.

"Mother's subscription to the Sunday-school Society, at Miss Green's."

They then came back to the Main street, went down and crossed over to a large yellow house.

"Is Miss Green at home?" asked she.

The lady soon made her appearance."

"I have come to pay mother's subscription," said Esther, handing out a dollar.

"It is paid very opportunely," cried Miss Green. "I am desirous to make up the account immediately, and send on the money. It could not have come at a better time."

"I am glad I brought it," said Esther, turning to go down the steps.

"One errand more," said she; "and I hardly know where Miss Lucy Leary lives, who made those shirts for mother, but perhaps we can find it,"—and they hastened off in another direction.

Esther went to one or two houses, before she found the right one; but at last Lucy Leary herself came to the door, and that settled the place where she lived.

"I have come to pay you for the rest of those shirts," said Esther. "Mother said it was two dollars."

"It is," answered Miss Lucy Leary. "Step in, while I change the bill. I wish to my

heart everybody that I work for would pay me as seasonably," said she, as they followed her into her small back kitchen. She left them standing, and was gone some time to make change.

"I had to make up my quarter's rent to-night," said she, on returning, "and I did not know where the money was all coming from, when I awoke this morning. I knew your mother owed me; but I only took the work home yesterday, and did not like to send to her for it. Other people have owed me ten times as long, but I can't get my due: these two dollars are just in the nick of time.'

"I am sure I am glad I thought of this," said Esther. "This rent is a pretty important business. People are liable to get turned out of comfortable quarters if they do not pay it in season."

They had again entered Main street, when Esther's name was called. She turned around, and saw Emily Shaw hastening after her.

"I am so glad it is you!" cried Emily.

"Is your trouble over?" asked Esther eagerly, looking into her face.

"Dear! No! nor ever will be! I am the most miserable creature on earth! What shall I, can I do, Esther?"

"What is the matter?" asked Esther.

"Let us go up and leave Ellen; or may be I will go into your house and tell you," and Emily hastened them along at a rapid pace.

"Let me go up into your chamber," said Emily on reaching Mr. Clark's. "I could not go with the girls this afternoon. I have been trying to walk away from myself and from everybody else. Esther, I am in real trouble!"

It was evident that something did distress Emily very seriously, although she made some attempts at a laugh.

Esther disposed of her little sister, and led Emily up into her chamber.

"Now, what is it?" cried she, as soon as they had shut the door.

"You know that lady who is visiting mo-

ther. Mother thinks a great deal of her. She is very rich and all that. Well, when she and mother were out yesterday morning making calls, I went into her room; and when I was there, I peeped into her drawer, and there I saw a little box full of rings. What should I do, but put one of the handsomest on my finger! I wore it to school, and—shocking to tell!—I have lost it! Now, Esther, what shall I, what can I do?"

"How came you in her chamber?" asked Esther.

"Oh, I did not think—I just went in."

"How came you to open the drawer?"

"Why, I did not think of any thing. I just did it," answered Emily.

"How dared you take the ring?" asked Esther; "and especially wear it away?"

"Why, I did not think of any thing. I did not, in fact, think much what I was about,—and it is lost!"

Neither of the girls spoke for several minutes.

"I knew you would think it was dreadful!" cried Emily. "It is so bad, you do not know what to advise. Dear me! What shall I do?"

"No," said Esther, with a tear in her eye, "I was only thinking what a sad thing it is not to think."

"What do you mean?" asked Emily with surprise. "I do not understand you."

"I mean to what trials and perplexities we subject ourselves, just because of thoughtlessness, or want of consideration," answered Esther. "All your present troubles are owing to your not stopping to think. Do you not see that they are, Emily?"

Emily still looked as if she did not more than half comprehend, and so Esther went on and explained still farther.

"Oh, dear!" cried Emily, "it is even more serious than I expected—you talk so very soberly, Esther. It seems to me you are making a mighty serious matter of not thinking," cried Emily.

"But is it not a serious matter?" asked

Esther, earnestly. "Have you not confessed and do you not feel that the loss of the ring is a very bad affair?"

"Yes, the loss of the ring certainly is."

"The loss of the ring is in consequence of your taking it, which you certainly had no right to do; but you did not consider when you put the ring on your finger, neither did you consider when you had it on, and so it slipped off when and where you do not know."

"Yes, it was just so, I suppose."

"That is, you did not think, Emily. You did not mean to do wrong, you say, and"——

"No, I am sure I did not," interrupted Emily. "I had no such idea."

"You did not mean to do wrong, perhaps; but the truth is, you ought to mean to do right, Emily. It is so easy, so natural to go wrong—I mean it is so for me—that in order to do right, we must stop and think. Thoughtlessness and carelessness lead us into so many evils, that they deserve to be considered very

great faults. They really grow out of our being so selfish—so very selfish."

"This is really a lecture!" cried Emily, reddening. "I expected more sympathy from you, Esther."

"Dear Emily," said Esther, putting her arm affectionately around her, "I do feel for you! I do feel very much for you, for I have had just such troubles; but I wanted to explain it. I wanted to show you what all this trouble of yours comes from, so that you might know how to avoid any more in future. I thought, I am sure you want to improve; that is what we ought to try to do."

The feeling tone with which Esther said this made Emily quite ashamed of her words; and she now asked, somewhat humbled, "What would you advise me to do, seeing I am fairly in the difficulty? As soon as this ring is missed, there will be trouble, I am certain. Perhaps the servants will be blamed. I cannot certainly stand that."

Esther did not speak immediately, but after

a few moments, she answered, "There is only one way that I know of, Emily."

"To tell of it?" exclaimed Emily. "I cannot do that!—Indeed, I cannot! For though they will not make so much of not thinking as you do, mother will say she is ashamed of my meddling, and will be very angry with me. Then the lady thinks a good deal of me now. I cannot bear to sink in her estimation, as I am sure I shall. Oh me! what a web of difficulties!" sighed poor Emily.

"I know of nothing else you can do honestly," said Esther. "You will feel very much better after the burden is off your mind; and then you must let it be a lesson to you, dear Emily."

"I am sure I shall not be likely to forget it very soon," replied Emily.

"Yes, one is very likely to forget such things, unless one makes it a point to think of them and determines to profit by them."

"I wish I could drive it from my mind!" cried Emily, petulantly; "it is really a burden!"

Esther tried to say every thing that a real friend would or could say under such circumstances. She did not say, "Never mind, Emily, I would not care any thing about it." "It is not much, Emily,—I would not worry about it." Esther wanted to effect a real cure; she desired to show its cause, to make Emily see it and feel it, and to feel that want of thought was a sin against God as well as against her fellow-beings, and to be willing to use such methods as would effect a radical cure. She well knew a real cure could not be accomplished in a minute, nor without strong and willing effort on Emily's part. Poor Esther knew what the disorder was, and how difficult to cure,—how much time, and patience, and thoughtfulness, and pains-taking, and prayer, and divine aid were necessary. She knew all this, and she knew also the relief of being cured. Esther, however, did not seem to make much impression upon Emily. She grew angry with the ring, with her mother, her mother's visitor and everybody else; and

her friend found it would be useless to say any thing more to her while in this state of mind.

In a little while after, she arose to go. Esther followed her to the door, and took her hand affectionately at parting; but a sullen and angry expression was upon her face, which it grieved Esther to see, because she well knew no one could improve or hope to do right while harbouring a proud and angry spirit. It left a mournful shade on Esther's countenance, which her father at tea, observing, said,

"What is the matter, my dear? You look perplexed and sad. The boys have not been mis-behaving themselves, I hope,—have they?" glancing at Alfred and John.

"No, sir! we have not been troubling Esther, or thought of such a thing!" they both cried in the same breath.

And Esther hastened to add, "Oh, no! sir,—I am sure I have no fault to find with them."

She then tried to banish the subject from

her mind, and enter cheerfully into her tea-table duties.

Perhaps some of our readers, with curiosity alive, may like to know how Emily's affair ended. Esther afterwards learned that the ring was accidentally found somewhere among her things; that she was accused of stealing it, and that it created quite an unhappy state of things in the family, which led to great distress.

How much better would it have been for Emily to have confessed just how it happened, and to confess it also before the missing ring was found! It would have saved a great deal of anxiety, and relieved her of the double burden which she afterwards bore.

"But Emily could have been saved all this, had she only thought, and thought right!" said Esther, sadly. "May God always help me to consider my ways, and cleanse the thoughts of my heart by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit."

Whether Emily profited by her trouble, or by the excellent and faithful advice given her

by Esther, I do not know. Perhaps, like a great many other young people, she let it slip from her mind, and remembered it no more, taking no heed of the lesson it taught her, but going on careless and thoughtless from day to day, from month to month, and from year to year, like an unsightly weed, neither beautiful in itself nor useful to others.

As for Esther, the more she thought, the more was she benefited by thinking. Scarcely a day passed without showing her the duty and the propriety of consideration, thereby leading her to discern the claims of others upon her time, and the necessity of exercising watchfulness and practising self-denial in order to meet those claims and fulfil her duties in the little sphere in which God had placed her. She often thought of the Scripture words, "Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established."

Her mother's visit, which was prolonged a fortnight, made trial of her strength, and enabled her father to see how great an improve-

ment had taken place in the character of his eldest daughter. It scarcely need be said how pleased and gratified he was. Esther continued to do as well every day and all the days of her mother's absence as she did on the first day, the incidents of which have been recorded. She did not merely begin well, but she held out to the end; which was a good evidence not only of a sincere and honest desire of amendment, but of the thorough change which was taking place in her character.

In one of Mr. Clark's letters to his wife, he wrote, "Do not be over anxious, nor hasten home on our account. Our dear daughter Esther is as thoughtful and considerate as need be. She seems to have corrected her careless habits wonderfully, and bids fair to be a real treasure to us all."

Mrs. Clark stayed until her mother was nearly recovered again, when she came back to her family; finding not only a place for every thing, which Mrs. Clark was always careful to have, but every thing in its place, which

Mr. Clark said was owing to Esther's thoughtful management.

I HAVE now given you a glimpse of Esther Clark's experience, and the wise use she made of it, in the hope that it may profit a multitude of young persons, who are now much like what Esther was, and whose daily life sadly proves them to be of that unhappy and useless class who do not stop to think. Should you be disposed to improve by her example, and desire to learn more of her after history, for Esther has now grown up, I will perhaps at some future time tell you more of her useful life and beautiful example. One thing only will I add now: If want of thought involves us in so many and such sad troubles as it respects our happiness and usefulness in this world, how dreadful are its consequences upon our eternal welfare!

It was not till the king of Israel "THOUGHT upon his ways that he turned his feet unto God's testimonies."*

* Ps. cxix. 5.

A HYMN FOR THE NEW YEAR.

"For who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the Lord."—JER. xxx. 21.

A YEAR, another year is fled;
Its issues who can tell?
Millions of voices of the dead
Reply from heaven or hell.

All these were living at the birth
Of the departed year;
They all have vanished from the earth;
We fill their places here.

Though to the eye, the ear, the mind
Of man, their speech is sealed,
The eternal meaning each may find
In two plain words revealed.

Lost spirits, from the dark abyss,
Cry mournfully, "Beware!"
Spirits in glory and in bliss
Sing joyfully, "Prepare!'

Thus timely warned, and moved with fear,
Of wrath, let us beware;
For life or death, in this NEW YEAR,
For earth and heaven prepare!

Who then of those with us, this day,
In childhood, youth, or age,
"To love the Lord our God" can say
"We all our hearts engage?"

JAMES MONTGOMERY.



"Nothing was to be seen of all the splendid mansion which had but the day before adorned the plain, while the house which was founded on the rock was secure, and no harm had come nigh that dwelling."—p. 103.

THE TWO BUILDERS.

Two men once lived in the same town. Each had inherited a large fortune, which he was at liberty to spend as he pleased, without any restriction. They planned for themselves various schemes of enjoyment, and at length each resolved to make choice of a suitable spot where he would erect a house to dwell in. They surveyed the neighbouring country, visited all the beautiful sites which attracted attention, and consulted those most capable of giving them advice; and after having hesitated for some time between various spots, each of which possessed strong recommendations, Securus at length found one which satisfied his wishes,* and he resolved to set about his building without delay. "Why," said he, "should I look

* Matt. vii. 26, 27; Luke vi. 49.

about any farther? This place seems to unite every thing in itself. Before me will be that broad and flowing river; behind will rise those mountains covered with trees adorned with the richest foliage. On the right, my view will open into the lovely valley that is formed by the windings of the stream; and on the left I shall have a distant view of the city, with its lofty towers and steeples. I shall not be restricted either in the size of my dwelling, or in the grounds which will surround it; for the whole land shall be mine as far as the eye can reach, and my ample fortune will secure to me every comfort and enjoyment. I will take my ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* I will lay out my pleasure-grounds with the most exquisite taste; trees of every kind shall adorn them, from the flowering shrub to the stately fir and forest tree; and the sweet melody of the birds, mingled with the sounds of the waters, shall constantly regale my ears. The gardens shall be filled with the choicest flowers, and I

* Luke xii. 19.

will never feel their loss, even in winter; for every exotic which can be brought from distant lands shall ornament my conservatories.* So, with all speed, Securus fixed on his plans.

He had a skilful architect to design his house, which was very extensive, and occupied a wide space of ground. It had wings on each side, with corridors and lofty porticoes. It afforded every convenience that heart of man could desire, and seemed more like a palace than a private dwelling.

Securus exulted with joy as his mansion rapidly arose. The soil of the plain was so light, that it cost the workmen but little labour to lay the foundation. Nay, there was much sand mixed with it, so that it yielded at once to their tools; and as no effort was lost to obtain as many hands as possible, the fabric rose as if by magic. The most luxuriant apartments were fitted up, the most ample rooms provided for entertainments; but in the whole of this edifice there was no place set apart for the

* Eccl. ii. 10.

worship of God: no consecrated chamber devoted to him.

Ere long the work was completed, and the happy Securus took possession of his dwelling. His heart bounded with exultation; he thought no one in the world was so happy as himself. His fields began to yield such abundant crops of corn, that he was obliged to pull down his barns and build greater, that he might have some place in which to bestow his fruits and his goods. "Here," said he, "I shall dwell for many years. I will not think of death, for it is yet very far off; and when it approaches it will be time enough to prepare for it. Life is given us to enjoy, and I shall doubtless see my children rising up around me, and prospering in the world; and when I am old, they will be ready to inherit my riches, and to share my honours."*

Securus was not, however, entirely wrapped up in these thoughts; for he determined that when he should have obtained for himself

* Prov. xiii. 11; Eccl. v. 10—14; James iv. 13—17.

every thing that he wanted, he would then assist his poorer neighbours, and give them part of his abundance. "They shall be welcome," he said, "to some of the produce which I do not require, provided that they never infringe on my territories, or interrupt my enjoyments."* The beauty of his grounds, the loveliness of the prospect which his house commanded, and the splendour of the paintings which adorned its walls, attracted multitudes of admiring guests, who vied with each other in flattering the happy Securus, and in envying his prosperity.†

One of the favourite topics of conversation at his table was the strange conduct of his neighbour Providus. "We began life together," Securus would say; "we were both amply provided for, and we both determined at the same time to build ourselves houses to dwell in; but while I have long ago reared and completed mine, and am enjoying the fruits of my estate,

* Prov. xxviii. 27.

† Prov. iii. 31; xiv. 20; xxiii. 17.

he has hardly yet built half his house, though a very much smaller one than mine."

"No wonder," said one of the guests. "The marvel is, that he has ever made any progress at all. Indeed, we thought he would never have decided on a site, for instead of looking around and choosing, as you have so wisely done, the most beautiful spot in the whole country, which has been by your excellent taste made into a complete paradise, he seemed to think nothing of the scenery around him; all he cared for was the ground beneath him, as if he was going to construct a dungeon rather than a dwelling."*

"Yes," said another, "and this is not all; for at length he chose an elevated spot, which really affords none of the comforts of life; and the labour and expense he is at are incredible, though, after all, his will be but a paltry affair when finished."

"What advantage did he propose to himself in making such a selection?" said Securus.

* Matt. vii. 24; Luke vi. 48; 1 Cor. iii. 11.

"I knew he was always a strange fellow, but yet he *seemed* to have plenty of forethought and wisdom; but his present conduct shows extreme folly. I suppose that the place he selected has been obtained at small cost, and perhaps he is determined to hoard up his fortune instead of living to enjoy himself."

"Not so," replied the other, "for he paid a large sum for the spot on which he is building, and many much more pleasant positions could have been had for less money. And indeed, if this was his aim, he is going the wrong way to attain it, for they say he is daily giving away so much of his fortune among the poor, that the fear is, he will hardly leave enough to enjoy himself with, when his house is completed."*

"But what can be his motive for such folly?" said Securus. "'Let a man look well to his own interests, and then let him be generous if he likes,' is my motto; but charity begins at home," added he with a laugh, which was echoed by the company.†

*Prov. xi. 24, xix. 17; Matt. xxv. 31–46. †Prov. xviii. 11, 12.

"But you have not heard all yet," said the guest who spoke first. "Not only has Providus chosen a strange position, but the soil is such, that the tools of the workmen have been constantly broken in the effort to dig a foundation; nevertheless Providus would not give up his plan. 'It is true it is a rock,' he would say, 'and your labour will be slow, but I will reward you accordingly,—only persevere, and in the end you will find it was well worth the toil.' So by his great gifts and promises he induced them to go on with the work, and I hope he will satisfy himself in the end. He has certainly a right to do as he pleases." This discourse was interrupted by sounds of the sweetest music, which appeared to come from an adjoining chamber. The doors were presently thrown open, and the most exquisite harmony of men-singers and women-singers was heard, mingled with all instruments of music;* and those who listened were entranced with delight. "Happy Secu-

* Eccl. ii. 1—11.

rus! nothing that heart can desire is withheld from him," said his guests. At another time gay companies, dancing and revelling, filled his saloons, and exotics from every quarter of the globe perfumed and adorned them.

Thus passed away his life; and, if we were to judge only by appearances, Securus was indeed a happy man; but there were moments when he asked himself whether these things would last for ever. Sometimes, in the midst of his mirth, he felt that it was like "the crackling of thorns under a pot,"* and often in the night-season, after he had been making merry with his friends, and he was left quite alone, a strange sad thought would come over him, "But thou must die.† What shall be the end of these things? Art thou ready? Whose shall all these things be which thou hast provided?‡ Thou broughtest nothing into this world, and it is sure that thou canst carry no-

* Prov. xxvii. 20, 24; Eccl. vii. 6.
† Eccl. ii. 23, ix. 12, xi. 8, 9.
‡ Eccl. ii. 18, 19, viii. 6—8.

thing out.* What if God should soon call thee hence?" Then he would try to put away these disagreeable thoughts from him, and to do all that he could to get to sleep: but his sleep would go from him, and he often lay tossing about on his downy couch till the morning, wishing that the night was over,† and that he could go forth and join his friends again, at their wonted amusements.

Meanwhile Providus went on with his house, and when it was completed he determined to invite all his poor neighbours together, and to give them a hospitable entertainment,‡ and he invited also all those who had taken part in the building, and who had persevered, in spite of all difficulties, in rearing his now comfortable dwelling, the walls of which were so thick and rested on such a sure foundation, that it seemed as if it could stand for ages. It so happened, that the same day was the anniver-

* 1 Tim. vi. 7.

† Deut. xxviii. 67; Job vii. 4.

‡ Neh. viii. 10; Luke xiv. 13, 14.

sary of that on which Securus had completed his house, and he too had appointed it to be a day of rejoicing. And he had called together all his wealthy neighbours and friends, to share with him in the festivities which he had planned for the occasion. Both houses were filled with the invited guests. It was a brilliant summer's day. Not a cloud to be seen in the sky. The air was so still that nothing seemed to move, and only the sweet sounds of music were heard floating through the air, mingled with those of merriment. The cooling fountains played in the gardens of Securus, and the river flowed silently through his meadows. Nothing could exceed the exquisite beauty of the scene; and those on the rock, who overlooked the party on the plain, seemed to share their enjoyments. Suddenly dark clouds began to gather together, the rolling of distant thunder was heard, and betokened that an awful tempest was approaching. Securus and Providus both hastened with their guests into their respective dwellings, and closing

their doors awaited the coming storm. The thunder grew more and more appalling; it seemed to burst directly over their heads; while the lightning flashed incessantly, illuminating the whole sky and making the intervening darkness the more terrible.* Suddenly those on the rock saw, by the glare of the lightning, that the river was rapidly rising. Soon it swelled over its banks and rushed all over the plain; while the rain and hail fell with such terrible violence, and the wind blew in such fearful gusts, that it seemed as if nothing could stand against them. Those on the rock felt no fear, for they knew the strong foundation on which their house stood,† and that it could not be shaken by the wildest storm. But, alas! for those in the plain, the widely-spread house of Securus was built on the sand; the waters of the river soon rose against its walls, and the awful tempest above

* Matt. xxiv. 37—44; Mark iii. 33—37.

† Deut. xxxii. 31; Isa. xxviii. 16; Matt. vii. 25; Luke vi. 48; 1 Cor. iii. 11.

came down upon it. The terrified inhabitants rushed out, but there was no escape. Screams filled the house; destruction on every side threatened them, and after rocking to and fro, one gleam of lightning showed that the house had fallen; and all the miserable inmates were overwhelmed in its ruins, or drowned in the stream.* Gladly would Providus and his friends have succoured them, but it was impossible; and when the morning dawned and the tempest had spent its rage, nothing was to be seen of all the splendid mansion which had but the day before adorned the plain,† while the house which was founded on the rock was secure, and no harm had come nigh *that* dwelling.‡

* Matt. vii. 27; Luke vi. 49.

† Prov. xiv. 11, xv. 25, xxiv. 20.

‡ Ps. xci. 1, 2, 9, 10; Prov. xii. 21, xix. 23.

THE HOUSE ON THE SAND.

A TRAVELLER came, with axe in hand,
To the beautiful Western prairie-land;
He journeyed many a weary day,
Till a noble river crossed the way;
On its banks he paused, with glistening eye
Upraised to an almost cloudless sky,
And gazed on the giant forest-trees
Swayed to and fro in the summer breeze.
Gorgeous wild flowerets grew around—
Such brilliant hues are rarely found
Mid haunts of men, save on prairie ground.

"Here," he exclaimed, "where the wild deer roam
And free birds warble, I'll build my home:

A cabin of logs with its thatched roof for me,
Near this broad, clear stream, my dwelling
shall be!"

"Nay, friend," said a voice, "if thou'lt listen
to me,
Who have felled from these woodlands many a
tree,
Choose *firmer* foundation; thou knowest not
the land;
Build high on yon rock, and not on the sand;
Perchance through the winter securely thou'lt
dwell,
But spring-tides will rush over valley and
dell."

The stranger heard,—but the rock looked
bare,
And the river banks were lovely and fair.
A hut soon rose; and the yellow grain
Promised many a loaded harvest wain:
The wheat was garnered—a bounteous store
Of Heaven's rich gifts the prairie farm bore.

Oft the lonely man blessed the guiding hand
Which had led his steps to that fertile land.

The summer was ended, the winter past,
The ice-king had bound earth and ocean fast.
With the first breath of spring a warning was heard,
Passing away as the song of the bird:
"Beware, beware of the rising tide!"
He heeded not; "I shall safely abide:
My roof-tree is strong and the river is wide."

At midnight it came! He awoke with the roar
Of the swelling waters entering his door.
He climbed the roof in his agony:
The waves seemed to mock at his misery.
Higher, still *higher!* Away they bore
The hut; and its inmate was seen no more.
As he sank mid the darkness, one look he gave,
From the foaming billows, his fearful grave,
To the barren *rock*, standing firm and secure,
Untouched by the tide, its *foundation sure.*

There are settlers of earth, who, despite warnings given,
By death from their homes are as suddenly driven.
Why build they on sand, which must surely decay?
For other foundation can no man lay
Than that which is safe through eternity—
The Rock of Ages,—cleft, sinner! for thee.

POLL PEG.

"There are in this loud stormy tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of the everlasting chime;
Who carry music in their hearts."

DISTANT something more than a mile from the village of Desford, in Leicestershire, England, at the lower extremity of a steep and rugged lane, was seen an obscure and melancholy hovel. The door stood not wide to invite observation; the cheerful fire gleamed not through the casement to excite attention from the passenger. The low roof and outer wall were but just perceived among the branches of the hedge-row, uncultured and untrimmed, that



"Sitting with her back towards the door, she perceived not the intrusion." p. 112.

ran between it and the road. As if there were nothing there that any one might seek, no way of access presented itself, and the step of curiosity that would persist in finding entrance must pass over mud and brier to obtain it. Having reached the door with difficulty, a sight presented itself such as the eye of delicacy is not used to look upon. It was not the gay contentedness of peasant life, that poets tell of, and prosperity sometimes stoops to envy. It was not the labourer resting from his toil, the ruddy child exulting in its hard, scant meal, the housewife singing blithely at her wheel, the repose of health and fearlessness,—pictures that so often persuade us happiness has her dwelling in the cabins of the poor. The room was dark and dirty; there was nothing on the walls but the bare beams, too ill joined to exclude the weather, with crevices but imperfectly stopped by torn and moulded paper. A few broken utensils hung about the room. A table and some broken chairs were all the furniture, except what seemed intended for a bed, yet

promised little repose. The close and smoky atmosphere of the apartment gave to it the last colouring of discomfort and disease. Within there sat a figure such as the pencil well might choose for the portrait of wretchedness. Quite gray, and very old, and scarcely clothed, a woman was seen sitting by the fireplace, seemingly unconscious of all that passed around her. Her features were remarkably large, and their expression harsh; her white hair, turned back from the forehead, hung uncombed upon her shoulders; her withered arm, stretched without motion on her knee, in form and colouring seemed nothing that had lived; her eye was fixed on the wall before her; an expression of suffering and a faint movement of the lip alone giving token of existence.

Sitting with her back towards the door, she perceived not the intrusion; and while I paused to listen and to gaze, I might have determined that here at least was a spot where happiness could not dwell; one being, at least, to whom enjoyment upon earth must be forbidden by

external circumstance,—with whom to live was of necessity to be wretched. Well might the listener in such a scene as this be startled by expressions of delight, strangely contrasted with the murmurs we are used to hear amid the world's abundance. But it was even so. From the pale shrivelled lips of this poor woman we heard a whispering expression of enjoyment, scarcely articulate, yet not so low but that we could distinguish the words, "Delightful!" "Happy!"

As we advanced with the hesitation of disgust into the unsightly hovel, the old woman looked at us with kindness, but without emotion; bade us be seated; and, till questioned, showed very little inclination to speak. Being asked how she did, she at first replied, "Very ill," then hastily added, "My carcass is ill,—but I am well, very well." And then she laid her head upon a cold, black stone, projecting from the wall beside the fire-place, as if unable to support it longer. We remarked that it was bad weather.

"Yes," she answered—then hastily correcting herself—"No, not bad—it is God Almighty's weather, and cannot be bad."

"Are you in pain?" we asked—a question scarcely necessary, so plainly did her movements betray it.

"Yes, always in pain—but not such pain as my Saviour suffered for me—his pain was worse than mine—mine does not signify."

Some remark being made on the wretchedness of her dwelling, her stern features almost relaxed into a smile, and she said she did not think it so; and wished us all as happy as herself. As she showed little disposition to talk, and never made any remark till asked for one, and then in words as few and simple as might express her meaning, it was slowly and by reiterated questions that we could draw from her a simple tale. Being asked if that was all the bed she had on which to sleep, she said she seldom slept, and it was long that she had not been able to undress herself—but it was on

that straw she passed the night. We asked her if the night did not seem very long.

"No—not long," she answered—"never long—I think of God all night, and when the cock crows, am surprised it comes so soon."

"And the days—you sit here all day, in pain and unable to move—are the days not long?"

"How can they be long? Is not He with me? Is it not all up—up?" an expression she frequently made use of to describe the joyful elevation of her mind.

On saying she passed much time in prayer, she was asked for what she prayed. To this she always answered, "Oh! to go, you know—to go—when He pleases—not till He pleases."

To express the facility she found in prayer, she once said, it seemed as if her prayers were all laid out ready for her in her bed. But time would fail us to repeat the words, brief as they were, in which this aged saint expressed her gratitude to the Saviour who died for her—her enjoyment of the God who abode

with her—her expectation of the heaven to which she was hastening—and perfect contentedness with her earthly portion. It proved on inquiry to be worse than it appeared. The outline of her history, as gathered at different times from her own lips, was this:—

Her husband's name was Peg; her own being Mary, she was usually known by the appellation of Poll Peg, and had been long remembered in the village, as living in extreme poverty, and going about to beg bacon at Christmas time. Her youth had been passed in service of various kinds; and though she did not know her age, it appeared from public events, which she remembered to have passed when she was a girl, that she could not be less than eighty. Later in life she had kept sheep upon the forest hills, and in the simplicity of her heart, would speak of her days of prosperity when she had two sheep of her own. She could not read; but from attending divine service had become familiar with the language of Scripture, and knew, though hitherto she

did not regard, the promises and threatenings it contains. We know nothing of her previous character; that of her husband and family was very bad—but we are not informed that hers was so. The first earnest religious feeling, she related of herself, was felt some short time previous; when walking alone in the fields, she bethought herself of her hard fate—a youth of toil, an old age of want and misery; and if she must go to hell at last, how dreadful was her portion! Struck with the appalling thought, she knelt down beneath the hedge to pray—the first time, perhaps, that heartfelt and earnest prayer had gone up to heaven from her lips.

Not very long after this, as we understand, the old woman was taken ill, and unable to move from the straw, at that time her only bed, in a loft over the apartment we have described—where, little sheltered by the broken roof and less by the rags that scarcely covered her, she lay exposed to the inclemencies of the weather, without money to support or friend

to comfort her. It was in this situation that her mind, dwelling probably on the things that in health passed by her unregarded, received the strong and lasting impression of a vision she thought she beheld, probably in a dream, though she herself believed that she was waking. In idea she saw the broad road and the narrow way, described in Scripture. In the broad road, to use her own expressions, there were many walking; it was smooth and pleasant and they got on fast—but the end of it was dark. In the narrow way she herself was treading, and some few others—but the way was rugged—some turned back, and others sat down, unable to proceed. She herself advanced till she reached a place more beautiful, she said, than any thing to which she could compare it. When asked what it was like, she could not say, but that it was very bright, and that there were many sitting there. Being questioned who these were—she said they were like men, but larger and more beautiful, and "all dressed in glitterings"—such was her ex-

pression—and one was more beautiful than the rest, whom she knew to be the Saviour, because of his readiness and kindness in receiving her. But the most pleasing impression seemed to be left by the hallelujahs this company were singing.

Thus ended her vision; but not so the impression it made. The recollection of the scene she had witnessed, and of the bliss that had been promised her, was the source of all her happiness. Turning her eye from earth to heaven, and fixing all her thoughts on that eternity to which she was hastening, it left her,—not what she before had been, wretched on earth and unmindful of any thing beyond—but with a heart deeply impressed with the love and mercy of God, fully and undoubtedly relying on her Saviour's promise, and proving the reality of those feelings by earnest devotion and most cheerful acquiescence in her Maker's will. It was not the fervour of a first impression—the enthusiasm of an excited imagination.

She survived six or seven years, but time made no change in her feelings. She passed those years in the extreme of poverty, dependent on the alms of some few persons who knew and visited her: she passed them in pain and helplessness; mocked and ill-treated by her husband and her sons, and insulted often by her unfeeling neighbours, who came to laugh at her devotion, and ridicule her hopes. For these, as well as for some who visited her for kinder purposes, she had but one answer—she wished that none of them might ever suffer as she did, but prayed that they might all be as happy as herself. When told that what she had seen was a mere dream and a delusion, she said it did not signify to tell her that: she had seen it, and it was the recollection of it that made her nights so short, and her days so happy. "And what does it signify," she added, "that they swear at me, and tell me I am a foolish old woman? Don't I know how happy I am?"

During the few years that she survived,

the minister of the parish saw her constantly, and found little variation in her feelings—none in her firm adherence to the tale she at first had told, and the persuasion that what she had seen was a blessed reality, sufficient to make her happy in every extreme of earthly wretchedness. And he saw her die as she had lived, in holy, calm and confident reliance on her Saviour's promises.

I have testified only to what I saw, and repeated only what my ear has listened to. And I have repeated it but to prove, that the happiness which all men seek, and most complain they find not, has sometimes an abode where we should least expect to find it. This is an extreme case—extreme in mental enjoyment as in external misery. But it is true. And if it be so, that a being debarred the commonest comforts of life, almost of the light and air of heaven, suffering, and incapable even of clothing herself, or of cleansing her unsightly dwelling, could yet pass years of so much happiness, that her warmest expression of gratitude to her bene-

factors, was to wish them a portion as happy as her own, what are we to say to those who, amid the overflow of sublunary good, make the wide world resound with their complainings?

I once made a visit to an aged saint, up three pair of stairs, in the neighbourhood of * * * *. She was sick and past work, and lived upon an allowance from the Aged Pilgrim's Society, and other doles of charity.

I found her at dinner on a mess of turnip-greens. There was no snow-white damask on the table, but it was well scoured; the greens had not had time to cool between the fire and the clean white plate to which, without rising, she neatly and carefully transferred them, assuring me she understood cooking very well. She told me turnip-tops were very dear: they used to be cheap in the country, where she lived when she was young, and she had been very fond of them; so having money that day, she thought she would treat herself to a good dinner.

"And very fine they are," she added, with a

look of exultation as she proceeded with her feast. "Nobody need have a better dinner; they only want a little pepper; but then," she added, with a complacent smile, "we cannot have every thing!"

"We cannot have every thing!" I repeated to myself, as I returned to an abundant home. Where is there another dinner eaten this day in the wide world with a relish so true, a taste so gratified, a heart so contented and well sufficed?

Amid the discontentments and complainings of a luxurious world, which nothing can silence, and nothing put to shame, how often have I thought since of the turnip-tops and pepper, the saintly pilgrim's "Every thing!"

I think of it often at tables plentifully furnished, and arranged with care and niceness —no comfort wanting, no reasonable desire unsupplied—some social feast perhaps, or full domestic board; when I remark that one looks sad, another seems dissatisfied, some speak complainingly, the most seem ill at ease, as if

they were there against their will, were disappointed about something that they came for, or had brought something with them that imbitters all.

Perhaps they have good cause, perhaps they have not; but who, then, may measure by externals the enjoyment even of external things —of a single hour, a single meal, to say nothing of those deep interior pains and pleasures, intenser joys and sorrows of the mind, which make external things pass unregarded?



PSALM LXXI.

With years oppressed, with sorrows worn,
Dejected, harassed, sick, forlorn,
To Thee, O God, I pray:
To Thee my withered hands arise,
To Thee I lift these failing eyes,—
O cast me not away!

Thy mercy heard my infant prayer,
Thy love, with all a mother's care,
Sustained my childish days:
Thy goodness watched my ripening youth,
And formed my heart to love thy truth,
And filled my lips with praise.

O Saviour! has thy grace declined?
Can years affect the Eternal mind?
Or time its love decay?—
A thousand ages pass thy sight,
And all their long and weary flight
Is gone like yesterday.

Then, even in age and grief, thy name
Shall still my languid heart inflame,
And bow my faltering knee:
Oh, yet this bosom feels the fire,
This trembling hand and drooping lyre
Have yet a strain for Thee.

Yes! broken, tuneless, still, O Lord,
This voice transported shall record
Thy goodness tried so long;
Till sinking slow, with calm decay,
Its feeble murmurs melt away
Into a seraph's song.

SIR R. GRANT.

BARNABY BIGGLES,

THE MAN OF MANY SORROWS.

BARNABY was not rich in paternal acres, but he was more than "well to do" in the world. He had thirty thousand dollars in stocks, a nice little country-house and garden, in Clapham, a good-natured wife, and five promising children. What more could he wish for? The lines had fallen to him in pleasant places, but Barnaby was slow to perceive them. He might have looked with an independent spirit on the world—he only cringed to it. He might have thanked Heaven for its manna in the pilgrimage—he murmured for the quails. He might have built up the fountain of his happiness—he only bored holes

in it, and the waters ever escaped. He might have carried quietude and peace in his bosom—he made it the temple of anxiety. He had no pleasant hermitage within, to which, even for a season, his spirit could resort. He looked at the gall on the surface of his cup, never saw the honey at the bottom. He saw no sunshine without clouds, and no cold coming without fogs.

"Patty's godfather died yesterday—old Jefferson," said Barnaby to his wife.

"Poor man—so suddenly!" remarked she. "I am sure I greatly loved him: he was so kind to us all."

"And Snap, my attorney, hinted this morning to me—Snap made his will, you know—that Patty has a legacy of two thousand."

"That is so like him, poor dear creature! Our little Patty did not need it to remember him. I'm sure she'll never forget him."

"Do you not think it is shabby enough, though? Died worth a hundred thousand—no relations—and only a paltry mite to his god-

daughter. Why, it would not buy a fashionable outfit for her on her wedding-day. Somebody will find full pockets now."

"I hope it will do good to whoever it falls to," said Mrs. Biggles.

"I hope so, but never saw such a thing come about yet. Fortune favours fools and rogues in such matters, while those who need the blessing are sure to remain needing it. Catch such a windfall coming my way."

"Let us be thankful, Barnaby, for what we have," suggested the better philosophy of his wife.

"Could I see ye, zur, for one minute?" said a shaggy head, popped in at the door.

"What do you want now, Jacob?" said Barnaby to the head; "pray, come in."

"Simpson has sent to say we must stop a-building the wall, zur. He says he won't have his light shut up."

Simpson was proprietor of the adjacent lot to Barnaby's. Unfortunately, that gentle-

man's windows overlooked the latter's ground, and the latter felt aggravated to think that Mr. S., Mrs. S. and the Misses S. should have and hold such a privilege as that of extracting pleasure from his possessions. It was not to be tolerated that any neighbour should overlook the very household operations of another, spy into every plant, flower and shrub vegetating in the other's garden, extract all manner of knowledge, without difficulty, regarding the cultivation of them; yea, even that his servants should know whether the Biggleses dined on cauliflower, cabbage, or peas. Like self-ill-used people generally, Barnaby resolved that his own should be his own; and with kindred tactics he erected a high brick wall, avowedly whereon to propagate the peach, but, actually, wherewith to shut out his neighbour. Unfortunately, Simpson's house was close by the boundary of Biggles's ground. The wall was allowed to proceed till it had reached an ordinary height; it arrived at an extraordinary one, and was evidently about to proceed to an unwarranted

one, having shut out the second-floor windows of Simpson from light, when the command which Jacob delivered his master, as above, was uttered.

"But I insist that you go on with the building, sir. You are my servant, and to me you are responsible. Go on with the wall."

The servant, uttering one of those untranslateable mumblings which servants are used and wont to do when at a loss for an answer, departed.

"Everybody seems bent on annoying us," observed Barnaby, at Jacob's exit. "There really is, I believe, no such thing as enjoyment in this world, without a thousand grievances swallowing it up. I am determined, however, Simpson shall not have *his* way. I am not going to be put upon by every fellow who chooses to try his experiments in insult. There, love, will you see whether that window is quite close? I am sure I feel a draught about my ears."

Mrs. B. declared she was sure they were all quite close.

"Then the hall-door is open—it must be open."

Mrs. B. looked down-stairs and denied the assertion.

"Well, this house is getting positively uncomfortable. Sit where one will, there are always draughts. We've tried the parlour, and two bed-rooms, and nursery, and given them up; and now the dining-room is quite as bad as the others. I wish I had my own money out of the place again."

At this instant a blubbering, choky utterance was heard outside the door, and straightway, as it opened, came rolling in, with a loud bellow, Master Billy Biggles. "Ow—ou—oh, papa! ow—oh! the dog—oh!"

"Bowles's dog, as I am a living man, has bit him!" shouted Biggles, jumping up.

The proprietor Bowles was an old maid, dwelling on the Biggles's left. Her dog was a quiet animal of the poodle variety; but Master

Billy had been (in pursuit of excitement) trespassing on the bounds of its good-nature. It tore his clothes, and tumbled him down, and, in the pride of the achievement, was now yelping on the lawn.

"It shall not live another hour!" roared Barnaby, rushing to his fowling-piece, and loading it with buck-shot. A crack was heard, a howl, and the doomed poodle weltered among the daisies.

"Fine morning, Mr. Biggles," said a passenger, meeting him next day on his way to town. "Does one's heart good to see such a morning—so fresh and bracing."

"Very fine, but awful cold—is it not?"

And Barnaby passed on his way office-wards, discontented in heart and visage, because the sun did not shed its warmth on an autumn morning. Had it been beautiful expanding summer heat, the answer would have been, "Very fine, but out of time for summer weather now."

Barnaby entered his office.

A little lad perched on a high stool, with an immense ledger before him, bobbed his head against the folio by way of doing homage.

"Moses, why are not these packages placed with the labels all fronting? There is no regularity or order there. Take them down again."

Moses sulkily proceeded to obey.

"Did Simon call this morning with an answer to the letter sent by him?"

"No, sir."

"That's a little surprising. I wonder what is the reason. I hope he has not forgot to deliver it,—forgot to bring an answer, or perhaps lost it. No advices from * * * * * yet," murmured Barnaby, laying down the last letter of a lot he had opened. "Two days since, word should have been here. These mails! I declare no dependence can be placed on them; but I will take care the public shall not be treated thus."

Forthwith Barnaby sat down and penned a

letter of inquiry to the editor of the "Evening Reformer," upon the subject of post-office delays, which duly appeared in the columns of that highly efficient and useful journal.

Having finished this laudable undertaking, his eye alighted on the unfortunate Moses fastening up a parcel. "Moses!" shouted he, "bring that parcel here. You do not mean to despatch it in that shape, surely? See! untie it. You are a downright fool, I declare."

"Yes, sir," said Moses, (either in relation to the assertion or command,) and proceeded, in any thing but wreathed smiles, to repack and retie the article.

There was an old woman who inhabited the porter-lodge at the gate to Barnaby's cottage. There had she dwelt for some ten years with a little girl, a grandchild, her own sons and daughters being dead or gone abroad, and altogether alike forgetful of her. She was often ill, and much in bed with rheumatism and other ailments peculiar to decaying humanity. To

Barnaby she paid no rent, and was thus so far indebted to him; while to his wife she was indebted for occasional additional comfort, in the way of a bottle of cordial or lot of coals. The grand-daughter did needlework, and eked out a few shillings weekly thereby, cheerfully toiling generally, and when not cheerfully at least quietly, knowing that an honest living could not otherwise be obtained. Barnaby had often seen the girl with her busy needle working at the window as he passed, and on warm days the old woman in an arm-chair, basking in the sunshine, with a half-knit stocking on her knee, but thought not at all about them, till, coming home one day, a heavy shower met him at the gateway, and he stepped into the lodge till it should pass over.

"Pray, come in, sir, and take a chair till the rain ceases," said the old woman, seeing Barnaby in the porch. "Lilly, lass, do thee dust that seat for the gentleman."

"Oh, pray, give yourself no trouble, good woman. I can stand here," replied Barnaby,

doubtful about the propriety of sitting in his own lodge. "I hope you are well, and your grand-daughter here."

"Not well to boast of, sir: far from that. This damp weather is very sore on me."

"I suppose it must be: you suffer a good deal, I believe, at times?"

"At times, sir; but I have little reason to complain for all that. The trouble is not of my making. I cannot remove it. I believe that the hand which wields the rod does wisely, and will in good time send a joyful deliverance."

"It is a pleasant thing to feel so comforted in affliction," said Barnaby, finding it necessary to say something.

"Yes, I thank God that while he wounds he also heals; and though he should cause his children to pass through the furnace, its flames will but purify them for his glory."

"We have all our trials," observed Barnaby, "and should all strive to think so, and to reflect on the end of them."

"True, sir; but it is worth while considering whether these trials are such, or are not, but are made such by us. When I was a bit of a girl, I recollect having to milk an ill-tempered cow that had a practice of kicking with her heels. Now, to cure her, I used to place a big stone behind her. Still the animal kicked, hurting herself, however, against the stone, which became a vexation and annoyance not in her way, but which she, nevertheless, sought to get rid of. Now, I have often thought that many people's trials and troubles were like the stone I used to place behind our cow—not at all in their way, but made troubles because they were kicked at, and only then."

"The shower is over—I must go now," muttered Barnaby, retreating towards the door.

Barnaby's heart was moved. He dropped a tear, and, looking upwards, clasped his hands.

"I wonder, my dear," said Mrs. Biggles, on the entrance of her spouse, "you did not think of coming home in the omnibus. These wet

days, I am sure, it would be much better to take advantage of it. See how damp you are all over."

"The omnibus is a downright imposture, my love. I will never enter it till the fares are reduced to the same rate as on other roads. I have written the 'Reformer' twice on the subject, and directed public attention to the scandalous extortion. Besides, that fellow Hopkins is said to be in it on a wet day, always insisting upon opening windows, and you know what a dread I have of draughts, and how certain I am to catch cold in them. People are obliged, I actually think, to lead a life of vexation and annoyance on account of other people; and no matter what good one strives to do for the public or our neighbours, it meets a thankless return."

"But still the omnibus, love, is——"

"Is an imposition and a fraud, and I will not countenance either till it is remedied."

Neither did Barnaby countenance it. He would not do himself such a wrong, nor society

such an injury. With a brave martyr-spirit he scowled down upon the perpetrators and encouragers of the evil, and, for himself, he strode home through the wet and cold.

What next? Why, he shivered one morning when he awoke,—felt sick and queer—so shaky he could not get his clothes on. The doctor came, said it was a fever coming, and prescribed blistering and baths. Another man in black appeared, with pen and ink, at the bedside, and wrote something, which the sufferer, with feeble shaking fingers, subscribed; and, as he left, another took his place, speaking in low earnest tones words of hope, while many faces, wet with tears, crowded around.

It was morning—a subdued ray of golden sunlight streamed in through the half-closed window, resting on the bed, and making doubly ghastly the pallid countenance of the sufferer, who seemed listening to the voice of the clergyman. Something crossed his mind; he looked troubled, and made a motion with his finger.

"Do you wish any thing, dear?" said his wife, placing her ear to his mouth.

He raised himself, with an effort, on his elbow, and, in broken, half-articulate words, said, "That light is an annoyance—too strong." He fell back with a deep moan—his countenance changed, and he breathed not again.

How large a share of all the troubles which afflict men must be ascribed to their own folly and sin! The stone would not hurt them if they did not kick against it. He that looks upon all the gifts of God as undeserved, and as bestowed through the merits and intercession of another, receives them with humble gratitude; while to a sour, discontented, churlish mind the brightest days are cloudy, and the richest gifts of Providence excite not a grateful emotion. Happy he who can see a heavenly Father's hand in all the dispensations of providence!

A SUMMER EVENING.

ANOTHER day, with mute adieu,
Has gone down yon untrodden sky;
And still it looks as clear and blue
As when it first was hung on high:
The sinking sun, the darkening cloud,
That drew the lightning in its rear,
The thunder, trumping deep and loud,
Have left no footmark there.

The village bells, with silver chime,
Come softened o'er the distant shore;
Though I have heard them many a time,
They never rang so sweet before:

A silence rests upon the hill,
A listening awe pervades the air;
The very flowers are shut, and still,
And bowed as if in prayer.

And in this hushed and breathless close,
O'er earth, and air, and sky, and sea,
A still low voice in silence goes,
Which speaks alone, great God, of Thee:
The whispering leaves, the far-off brook,
The linnet's warble fainter grown,
The hive-bound bee, the homeward rook,
All these their Maker own.

Now shine the starry hosts of light,
Gazing on earth with golden eyes:
Bright sentinels that guard the night,
What are ye in your native skies?
I know not! neither can I know,
Nor on what leader ye attend,
Nor whence ye came, nor whither go,
Nor what your aim or end.

I know they must be holy things
That from a roof so sacred shine,
Where sound the beat of angel wings,
And footsteps echo all divine.
Their mysteries I never sought,
Nor hearkened to what science tells,
For, oh! in childhood I was taught
That GOD amidst them dwells.

The deepening woods, the fading trees,
The grasshopper's last feeble sound,
The flowers just wakened by the breeze,
All leave the stillness more profound.
The twilight takes a deeper shade,
The dusky pathways darker grow,
And silence reigns in glen and glade,
While all is mute below.

And other eves as sweet as this
Will close upon as calm a day,—
Then, sinking down the deep abyss,
Will, like the last, be swept away,

Until eternity is gained,—
The boundless sea without a shore,
That without time for ever reigned,
And will when time's no more.

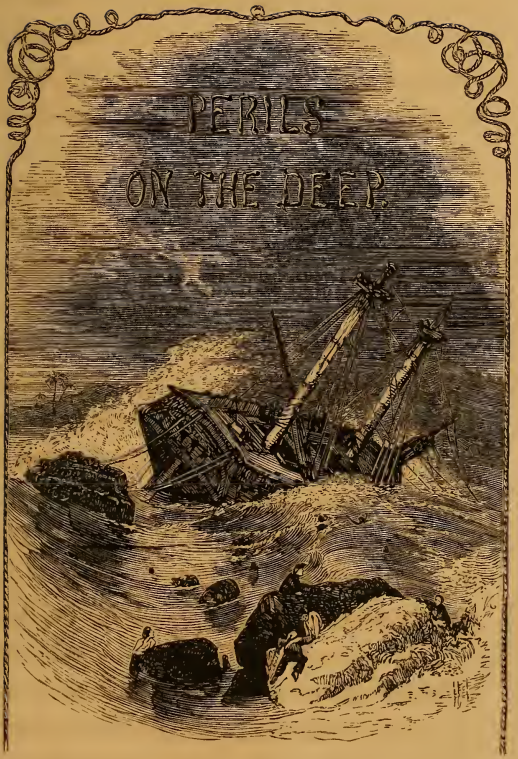
Now nature sinks in soft repose,
A living semblance of the grave;
The dew steals noiseless on the rose,
The boughs have almost ceased to wave:
The silent sky, the sleeping earth,
Tree, mountain, stream, the humble sod,—
All tell from whom they had their birth,
And cry, "Behold a God!"



THE HURRICANE AT SEA.

"Hide me till thy wrath be passed,
Thou who canst slay or save!
Hide me, where hope may anchor fast,
In my Redeemer's grave."

THE morning of the eventful 25th November (says the author of "The Sailor's Hope") was ushered in by a dark and lowering sky, and all that day the heavens were overcast, and the wind was high, though not more so than might naturally have been expected at the change of the monsoon. Nothing, I am sure, was further from the thoughts of any one on board, than the occurrence that day of such a hurricane as cast our fine and beautiful ship a wreck upon the shores of Australia. I was, at the time, dangerously ill in my cot. A screen of



"She had been thrown up between two rocks by one mighty rush of water." p. 151.

tarpaulin had been drawn across the break of the poop, to protect me from the wind and rain, which, towards evening, was split into ribbons, and I was removed for security into the captain's cabin. Here I remained for some hours in fancied security, wholly unconscious of even the approach of danger, till the gun-room steward made his appearance in the cabin with the startling intelligence that we had *parted both anchors!* The hurricane had commenced, and we were now completely at the mercy of the winds and waves; not a sail was bent in the ship, nor (had they been on the yards) could a stitch of canvas have stood before the fury of the blast. I immediately begged the young man to go on deck and look out for his own safety, assuring him he could be of no service to me in my then weakly state. "No, sir," he nobly replied, "I will never leave you, so long as the ship holds together;" and, notwithstanding all my entreaties, he could not be persuaded to leave my bed-side.

From the continual shifting of the wind, two hours must have elapsed before the ship touched the ground, during which time we were being driven about the harbour, whither we knew not. On being hurried rapidly along, we passed close by, though providentially just clear of, a ten-gun brig, which was then being dragged by the gale, *with three anchors at her bows!* Blue lights were burned, and signal guns and rockets fired, to warn and call back a warning from her; but so completely helpless were we, that had not the Lord interposed his most gracious and merciful aid, a collision must have taken place, which would have swallowed up both vessels, and sent every soul on board to his final account.

At last she struck. It was on mud, and we hoped that she had thus made a bed for herself during the night; but the now raging hurricane would not allow her to rest quietly even here. The lurid flashes that occasionally illuminated the horizon, and, for an instant, gave those on deck a faint outline of the little brig and the

shores of the harbour, were unseen by us below; but the fury of the wind, the distant rumbling of the thunder—the thunder crashing over our very heads in a way only known to the traveller in tropical climates—were sounds that could not escape the ear. As wave succeeded wave, and each broke over our vessel, the ship trembled while she shook off the foaming sea. At this time, all the sick were assembled together in the cabin, under the surgeon's personal care, who was one of the kindest, most attentive, and withal most talented officers, of whom the service could boast.

But, as I have already said, the raging of the wind would not allow the vessel to rest in her bed. Suddenly she gave a heavy lurch to port, and almost instantaneously fell over on her starboard side! She had been, it would seem, thrown up between two rocks by one mighty rush of water, when the violence of the succeeding wave wrenched off her fore-foot, false keel, and part of keel, and forced her over into deep water—*to fill and sink!* It

was not my lot to be on deck at this fearfully critical period, but the sufferings of those who were at this moment plunged into the boiling surf—the life-clinging grasp of the survivors to the rigging and spars—the agonizing but unavailing struggles of the drowning—could well be conceived by us, who at this time envied even the lot of those who were on deck, so utterly hopeless seemed our chance of escape.

The rush of water through the fore-scuttle and several hatchways, battened down though they were, was now truly terrific. The cabin was being rapidly filled. Not an instant was lost in attempting to escape into the gun-room passage, through the door, which was now *over our heads!* A lantern had, but a few minutes previously, been hung by the surgeon to a cot-hook, on what providentially proved to be the weather-side of the ship, and by its light all had reached the passage, save a private marine and myself. This man, on my pressing him to hasten to the door, refused till he had seen me there first—a noble proof, that in the midst

of danger, it is not the part of a true sailor, or a brave soldier, to forget or neglect a friend in distress. At last I succeeded in reaching the passage, but from my extreme weakness at the time, I dropped back again into the middle of the cabin, which was now filled with drawers, crockery, &c., thrown from their proper places. The marine, to his honour be it said, again descended, and brought me in safety to the door.

As the water was rapidly rising, despair prompted two of the stoutest of our party to use every effort to force open the companion-hatch. The pressure from without was, however, an irresistible barrier, and their want of success was mercifully made the means of our ultimate escape. Had the hatch at that moment been removed, the immediate rush of water must have forced us back with fury into the vessel, and, so far from the object contemplated being effected, the ship must have been completely filled before she was driven into shoaler water, and thus all would have inevi-

tably perished. The attempt was, at length, given over, and all seemed hopeless. It was, indeed, a moment of peril. Destruction stared us in the face, and a watery grave seemed before us, without a hope of relief. There was nothing to encourage us in the least to expect that the water would cease to rush in, till the vessel was completely full; and nothing but the most gracious interposition of Providence could have prevented it. The water on the outside, as we afterwards ascertained, was up to the weather-hammock nettings, at which height, *within* the vessel, we must, of course, have all been drowned. But, ere this could take place, the continuing and furious gale had thrown the ship into shoaler water, scraping, as she went, a mass of cement, which was subsequently found on her side, and which was so hard that nothing but a pickaxe could penetrate it.

All hope was now shut out, and escape seemed impossible. The water being over the hatchways, we no longer heard the long, con-

tinuous, soul-racking splash, and we betook ourselves, without exception, to call upon HIM who alone could hear us, striving—some of us, I fear, in the agonies of despair—to make our peace with God. Agonizing calls for mercy from hearts bleeding for the sins of a whole life, were heard on all sides; *for what was the world to us then?* Not a moment of time would we have given for *all* its riches—time which we had so long wasted, and of which, up to this fearful moment, we had not known the exceeding preciousness. Had it, in times past, been properly redeemed by us—had it *then* been Christ to live, it would have *now* been gain to die; had the Lord been our hope from our youth, he would now have been our portion, and we should have been laying hold upon him, as a *sure* possession. The prayers of all became fainter and fainter, and, at last, gradually died away. Still the water rose, and still we awaited our fate with fear and trembling. The lantern at last went out, buried in the

water—an emblem, thought I, of the change which was so soon to pass upon us.

The water had, by this time, risen to our shoulders, and I found myself still struggling between fear and hope; all the many warnings I had received flashing across my mind; flashing, too, with a force which each one seemed, at times, separately and distinctly to possess. Events of a whole life crowded into it in a moment. Events of yesterday, and events long since past and forgotten—scenes of youth, and scenes of manhood—scenes at hand, and scenes dearer and more distant—all were distinctly and powerfully brought to mind.

Struggling, as I have said, between fear and hope, I sometimes found the latter to prevail, and I well recollect sinking once in trust upon my Saviour's merits. Instantly, however, I raised my head in fear, for, to such a height had the water now risen, that it was only by pressing our lips between the bars of the cabin above us, that we were enabled to draw a single breath. The rush of water then undulated

over our heads, burying the whole body,—another breath, and the wave returned!

I know not how long we were thus suspended between life and death; but, at length, the water began to retire, and we were enabled to breathe more freely. It continued for some time to rise and fall, keeping us in the most awful state of suspense, till at length our whole bodies were dry. A death-like stillness now reigned around, contrasting fearfully with the wild wind and the remorseless dash of the billows outside, accompanied by the crash of the thunder above. I now ventured to put forth my hand in search of my companions. It fell on the cold, damp body of what I supposed to be a corpse. I was, however, agreeably deceived in my fear; I found that he was still living. We then joined, as with one consent, in grateful thanks to God, that there was a hope of escape for our souls from death. Few, I think, among us, did not on that night resolve with the sacred writer, to "receive the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the

Lord." "The work is the Lord's!" cried we; "to him be ascribed all thanksgiving and praise!" But, alas! as soon as his chastening hand was removed from us, we again began to go astray; and, when once more we put foot upon the firm ground of Australia, we "remembered not his marvellous works that he had done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;" thus proving, that our late confession of sins and pleadings for mercy arose simply from a dread and fear of judgment, and not from any real longing to be released from the burden of our great and crying sins, or any desire to "depart from all iniquity, and to serve the living God."

At length the dismal scene drew near its close. I heard a voice from the main hatchway, which I recognised as that of the boatswain's mate, calling me loudly by name. Without making a reply, I dived instantly down where I caught a glimpse of light, through the gun-room hatch, and came out on the other side! My companion soon followed, and we found that

the rest of the party had already escaped by the main hatchway. The surgeon was the first person I met with at this most happy moment, and, through his kindness and attention, I was soon carefully enveloped in blankets.

Our actual position at this time could not be ascertained. The hours of darkness, during which nothing could be done, must have appeared an age of anxiety and deep suspense to those who had passed all the night on the cold side or rigging of the ship; but to us, who had but just been admitted to any hope at all, it was far otherwise. Day at length dawned upon that night of terrors, and the appearance of land within a few hundred yards of us was a most cheering sight. The brig had been driven into a small bay, with a reef of rocks lying outside of her, and with a heavy surf then washing the beach. Property, public and private, was floating out of the hatchways with every drawback of the surge—casks of flour, and empty casks that once held spirits and other stores, dressing cases, boxes, pieces of furniture, books,

instrument cases, and writing-desks—all floated about in a confused mass.

Several of our men swam to the shore during the morning, and we now discovered the marines of the settlement, that had recently been established on shore, ready to lend us a helping hand. No time was lost in making a raft, which conveyed on shore the surgeon and the sick; but, as soon as we got to land, the spars broke adrift, and the raft, perhaps too hurriedly put together in the first instance, afforded no further assistance. The men were, however, in comparative safety, the strength of the gale having abated; and, although not a boat of ours survived the gale, yet one soon arrived from the more fortunate brig. The cold at this time was intense. I think I never felt so bitter a blast.

Not content with waiting for the boat, which was now coming to take our people off the wreck, several of the crew persisted in swimming on shore, one of whom, the ship's cook, a stout and corpulent man, thus recklessly lost

his life. His strength having failed him as he neared the shore, one of the natives swam out to his assistance, and brought him, but only after life was extinct, to the beach. On mustering the ship's company, we discovered that one officer, six men and a boy were lost, and natives were despatched to look into the adjoining bays and creeks for the bodies of our missing shipmates. Four corpses were thus brought in, besides that of the cook; two were subsequently found below in the ship, and one was never recovered. The missing body was that of one who had frequently followed Wellington to victory, and was now on his way to reap the reward of his labours in the Royal Hospital of Greenwich. A few hours before he was in health, and I was all but given over by the surgeon; yet, in the wisdom of Providence, he was taken and I was left! That night consigned his body to corruption, and restored mine, strange as it may seem, to the blessings of comparative health.

On looking around us, the effects of the hur-

ricane were everywhere apparent. The whole scene was changed by one night's howling blast. The prospect was really desolate. Noble trees, that had reared their heads but the previous day, lay felled to the ground, in all the splendour of their rich foliage. Branches, large and small, lopped from them, lay broken around, and *tons of stone* were attached to others that had been torn up by the roots. Birds of the richest colours, carnation, crimson, purple, green, that formerly had sported near us, were now gone, literally swept from the forest.

The bodies of our seven shipmates were laid side by side in one little enclosure, which we afterwards railed round. Those that had sailed together slept together, and there we left them some months afterwards, their grave overgrown with shrubs and grass, and themselves converted, with the very monuments raised to commemorate them, into ashes, dust and ruin! When I look back upon that eventful night, with all its horrors, and yet with all its bless-

ings,—when I reflect upon the wonderful goodness of the Lord, in having thus snatched us from the very brink of destruction,—when I consider that the snares of death had compassed us about, and the pains of hell, as it were, gat hold upon us,—I am constrained to magnify the riches of God's distinguishing grace, that I should be permitted at this time to be recording his much-abused mercies!

Dear reader! providences may solemnize, but *they cannot save the soul.* They may awe you into seriousness; they may, perhaps, drive you to your knees; but they cannot change your heart. That is the work of God's Holy Spirit, and he alone can do it. Has it been done in *you?* Is your peace made with God through the blood of his dear Son? Is the deep, calm peace, which the gospel gives when believed, shed abroad in your heart? Or are you deferring till some startling providence—some bereavement it may be—shall cast over you its solemnizing influence, in the belief that *then* you will be more disposed to attend to

these matters? If you are laying this flattering unction to your soul, beware! Millions have done as you are doing, and thereby have purchased for themselves a hardened heart, and, at last, an eternal hell! "*Now*," saith God, "is *my* time—not *to-morrow*."

"O hearken to the healing voice,
That speaks from heaven in tones so mild!
To-day are life and death our choice;
To-day, through mercy reconciled,
Our all to God we yet may give;
Now let us hear his voice and live."



A CONTENTED MIND.

I.

Some murmur, when their sky is clear
And wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear
In their great heaven of blue:
And some with thankful love are filled
If but one streak of light,
One ray of God's good mercy gild
The darkness of their night.

II.

In palaces are hearts that ask,
In discontent and pride,
Why life is such a dreary task,
And all good things denied:

And hearts in poorest huts admire
How Love has in their aid
(Love that not ever seems to tire)
Such rich provision made.





Holfeld pinx. C Deucker fc

THE INFANT PRAYER.

What a blessed office is that of the Christian mother, when teaching her infant child to pray! With its first waking moments, she would have him associate the kind care and watchful oversight of our heavenly Father! She hastens to his little crib, and gently helps him to fold his chubby hands, and while he can yet scarcely speak the words intelligibly, she whispers to him that simple but sublime appeal,

"Our Father which art in heaven."

Our Father! What tender thoughts of love, pity, protection and guidance does the expression awaken! Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* Who feeds the fowls of the air? "Your Heavenly Father feedeth them."†

* Ps. ciii. 13. † Matt. vi. 26.

Shall we not be concerned lest our food or clothing should fail us, and we should be exposed to cold, and famine, and nakedness? Be not anxious about the future. Trust in God, and your wants will be supplied. "For your HEAVENLY FATHER knoweth that ye have need of these things."*

WHICH ART IN HEAVEN! The supreme, unchangeable, eternal Ruler and Overseer of all the universe—the King of kings and the Lord of lords! What a Father! What a throne!

Though the meaning and object of the words may be but imperfectly comprehended, there is impressed upon his infant mind the idea of weakness—of dependence—of a superior and supreme Being as an object of love and reverence—and of His willingness to hear and answer the requests even of little children—though it be but

> The simplest form of speech
> That infant lips can try,—

the very habit of recognising the unseen but

* Matt. vi. 32.

powerful arm of the Almighty, as our dependence and support—formed in infancy and carefully cherished through the period of childhood and youth,—is of inestimable importance.

And, perhaps, there is no Christian duty or privilege that a little child can more readily comprehend than this. For there is scarcely an emotion of its soul that is not intimately connected with two of the chief elements of prayer—DEPENDENCE and LOVE. It is the mother's heavenly office gently to raise the affections—which would fain fasten themselves supremely upon her—to the Being on whom they are both dependent for life, and breath, and all things. She would persuade her infant offspring, that the gentlest accents of a mother's love are not so gentle as those of divine compassion—"I love them that love me," and that the most faithful offices of a mother's devotion are not to be compared with the care and patience of the kind Shepherd,

> Who takes young children in his arms,
> And calls them HEIRS OF HEAVEN!

TIME AND ETERNITY.

WRITTEN BY SIR WALTER RALEIGH, THE NIGHT BEFORE HIS EXECUTION.

EVEN such is time; that takes on trust
 Our youth, our joys, our all we have.
And pays us but with age and dust;
 Who in the dark and silent grave
(When we have wandered all our ways)
Shuts up the story of our days.—
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
My God shall raise me up, I trust.

THE STING OF DEATH IS SIN.

How many times has this awful truth been uttered to wake the slumbering soul; to rouse up man's better energies in time for him to save his soul alive; to warn him of that terrible moment when the end of his life shall be at hand, when he shall feel that the time for working in his Father's vineyard is ended, and that he must now present himself before the judgment-seat to receive his sentence. In that hour he shall see each man rewarded according to the deeds done in the body,—those that have done well being blest with a resurrection to eternal life; but those that have done evil being cursed with the resurrection of condemnation. It is an awful thing to die—to feel that the time is come for fixing the seal upon one's life, and giving it the stamp which marks

its character for good or ill—that now the night is come wherein we can no longer work, can do nothing more to work the will of Him who gave us our being, and can no longer prove that the repentance which we profess for past sins is true and heartfelt, and does not need, itself, to be repented of. It is an awful thing to feel, that we have arrived at that period when our heavenly Father sees that a longer continuance in this scene of trial will do us no further good, and that we must be removed hence. If we can then think of the condition of our souls, of the many imperfections that have attended our best services, and the many grievous faults that still remain uncorrected, how bitter must be the thought that our Father, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, judges that our life must now end, for he knows that we shall do no more to improve the trust committed to us. We may perhaps at such a time, when this world is rapidly fading away, and the future is opening vividly before us, feel with terrible force how utterly we have neglected

the talent intrusted to our care. We shall indeed then feel that sin is the sting of death; and we shall feel too that it is then too late—we are not worthy to enjoy any further time of probation—but must pass on into the presence of God, conscience-smitten with a deep sense of our dreadful guilt. The sins which have most easily and constantly beset us will still be with us—accusing us to our own consciences—and bitter will be the feeling that the time has past by for working out our repentance. How shall we then lament over our mis-spent time, and think with unavailing sorrow of our neglect of the lessons which have been given us from our Father's chastening love! In what bitter anguish shall we then call upon him to have compassion upon us, and to send his pardoning mercy to our souls!

We sit by the bedside of a friend whom God is taking from us. He has been the joy and solace of our life—our souls have been knit together. We think, with fearful trembling, how dark and blank our life on earth will be

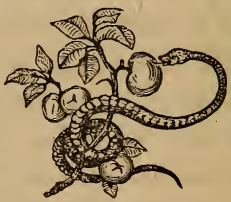
without his company and friendly sympathy. His work is done, and he is going hence. We are left behind to travel the rest of our pilgrimage alone. Weary and desolate does the road seem, now that he is gone whose presence had brightened our path. We feel that he is gone to his Father in heaven—for we know that he had always lived here, as in his sight, and had striven to do his work. We look forward with eager longings to the time when we shall meet again in that happy world.

But gradually our hopes are overcast with doubt—our own past life rises up before us—we compare it with that which we have just seen close—and then we feel ourselves, while still in life, that the sting of death is sin. The sting of our great grief at parting with those who are taken from us, is poisoned by the thought that our own past life may have rendered us unfit for admission to that society of the blessed into which we fully believe that our dear friend has entered. How grievously does this thought aggravate our sorrow!

In a little while, when the first fresh anguish of the parting has passed away, we learn to thank our heavenly Father for the remainder of that road which he has left us to travel over, and the prospect of which had at first cast down our soul: for along it we now see work to be done, and temptations to be resisted, which may prove the truth and strength of our repentance, and in God's infinite mercy, through grace that is in Christ Jesus, may lead us too into his presence. We praise his name for his great goodness in giving us these additional helps to enable us to do those things which are well pleasing in his sight. We resolve to do all things to his glory, and to show by our lives, that these lessons of his love have not been lost upon us; and we thank him with a fervent heart for that repentance which begins by the bedside of a dying friend.

This repentance may not be too late, for it has life in it, and will bear fruit, if we watch over it with unwearied care, and pray earnestly for God's blessing upon it. Then the sting which

we felt so keenly at the death of our friend, may, in God's mercy, have saved us from the far more terrible one which we shall feel, if our own death-bed should be imbittered by the memory of sins unrepented of and unforgiven, and of a whole life wasted in the neglect of its great end—the SALVATION OF THE SOUL.



HYMN IN SICKNESS.

I.

Father, thy gentle chastisement
Falls kindly on my burdened soul:
I see its merciful intent
To warn me back to thy control,
And pray, that, while I kiss the rod,
I may find perfect peace with God.

II.

The errors of my heart I know;
I feel my deep infirmities;
For often virtuous feelings glow,
And holy purposes arise,
But like the morning clouds decay,
As empty, though as fair, as they.

III.

Forgive the weakness I deplore;
And let thy grace abound in me,
That I may trust my heart no more,
But wholly cast myself on thee;
Oh, let my Father's strength be mine,
And my devoted life be thine.



THE PERSECUTED ASTRONOMER.

It was a still, clear night in the month of May, 1543: the stars shone brightly in the heavens, and all the world slept in the little town of Wernica, a canonry of Prussian Poland—all save one man, who watched alone in a solitary chamber, at the summit of a lofty tower. The only furniture of this apartment consisted of a table, a few books, and an iron lamp. Its occupant was an old man of about seventy, bowed down by years and toil, and his brow furrowed by anxious thought; but in his eye glowed the fire of genius, and his noble countenance was expressive of gentle kindliness, and of a calm, contemplative dispo-

sition. His white hair, parted on his forehead, fell in waving locks upon his shoulders. He wore the ecclesiastical costume of the age and country in which he lived: the long straight robe, with a fur collar and double sleeves, which were also lined with fur as far as the elbow.

This old man was the great astronomer, NICHOLAS COPERNICUS, doctor of philosophy, divinity and medicine; titular canon of Wernica; and honorary professor of Bologna, Rome, &c. Copernicus had just completed his great work "On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Bodies." In the midst of poverty, ridicule and persecution, without any other support than that of his own modest genius, or any instrument save a triangle of wood, he had unveiled heaven to earth, and was now approaching the end of his career just as he had established on a firm basis those discoveries which were destined to change the whole face of astronomical science. On that very day the canon of Wernica had received

the last proof-sheets of his book, which his disciple Rheticus was getting printed at Nuremberg; and, before sending back these final proofs, he wished to verify for the last time the results of his discoveries. Heaven seemed to have sent him a night expressly fitted for his purpose, and he passed the whole of it in his observatory. When the astronomer saw the stars beginning to grow pale in the eastern sky, he took the triangular instrument which he had constructed with his own hands out of three pieces* of wood, and directed it successively towards the four cardinal points of the horizon. No shadow of a doubt remained; and, overpowered by the conviction that he

* Tycho Brahe has preserved to us a drawing of this instrument, which was the means of accomplishing such wonderful discoveries, and which was sent to him after the death of Copernicus by John Hanovrius, bishop of Wernica. It is difficult for us to conceive how a triangle so rude in its formation, and so irregular in its movements, could have supplied, in the hands of this great man, the place of those infallible telescopes which have since served to confirm his discoveries.

had *indeed* destroyed an error of five thousand years' duration, and was about to reveal to the world an imperishable truth, Copernicus kneeled in the presence of that glorious volume whose starry characters he had at first learned to decipher, and folding his attenuated hands across his bosom, thanked his Creator for having opened his eyes to understand and read aright these His glorious works. He then returned to the table, and seizing a pen, he wrote on the title-page of his book—"Behold the work of the greatest and the most perfect Artisan: the work of God himself." And now, the first excitement having passed away, he proceeded, with a collected mind, to write the dedication of his book:—

"To the Most Holy Father, Pope Paul III.: I dedicate my work to your holiness, in order that all the world, whether learned or ignorant, may see that I do not seek to shun examination and the judgment of my superiors. Your authority, and your love for science in

general, and for mathematics in particular, will serve to shield me against wicked and malicious slanderers, notwithstanding the proverb which says that there is no remedy against the wounds inflicted by the tongue of calumny, &c.

"NICHOLAS COPERNICUS—*Of Thorn.*"

Soon the first dawn of day caused the lamp of the astronomer to burn more dimly; he leaned his forehead upon the table, and, overcome with fatigue, sank into a peaceful slumber. After sixty years of labour, he in truth needed repose. But his present repose, at all events, was not destined to be of long duration: it was abridged by the entrance of an aged servant, who, with slow and heavy step, ascended the tower stairs.

"Master," said he to the canon, as he gently touched him upon the shoulder, "the messenger who arrived yesterday from Rheticus is ready to set out on his return, and is only waiting for your proof-sheets and letters."

The astronomer rose, made up the packet,

which he duly sealed, and then sank back upon his chair, as if wearied by the effort.

"But that is not all," continued the servant; "there are ten poor sick people in the house waiting for you; and besides, you are wanted at Frauenberg, to look after the water-machine, which has stopped working; and also to see the three workmen who have broken their legs in trying to set it going again."

"Poor creatures!" exclaimed Copernicus. "Let my horse be saddled directly." And with a resolute effort, shaking off the sleep which weighed down his eyelids, the good man hastily descended the stairs of the tower.

The house of Copernicus was, in outward appearance, one of the most unpretending in Wernica: it was composed of a laboratory, in which he prepared medicine for the poor; a little studio, in which this man of genius, skilled in art as well as in science, painted his own likeness or those of his friends, or traced his recollections of Rome and Bologna; and lastly, of a small parlour on the ground-floor,

which was ever open to all who came to him for remedies, for money, or for food. Over the door an oval aperture had been cut, through which a ray of the mid-day sun daily penetrated, and resting upon a certain point in the adjoining room, marked the hour of noon. This was the astronomical *gnomon*, or dial-hand, of Copernicus; and the only ornament the room contained were some verses written by his own hand, and pasted up over the chimney-piece.

It was in this parlour that the good canon found the ten invalids who had come to claim his assistance; he dressed the wounds of some, administered remedies to others, and on all he bestowed alms and words of kindness and consolation. Having completed his labours, he hastily swallowed a draught of milk, and was about to set out for Frauenberg, when a horseman, galloping up to the door, handed him a letter. He trembled as he recognised the hand-writing of his friend Gysius, bishop of Culm. "May God have pity on us," wrote

this latter, "and avert the blow which now threatens thee. Thy enemies and thy rivals combined—those who accuse thee of folly, and those who treat thee as a heretic—have been so successful in exciting against thee the minds of the people of Nuremberg, that men curse thy name in the streets; the priests excommunicate thee from their pulpits; and the university, hearing that thy book was about to appear, has declared its intention to break the printing presses of the publisher, and to destroy the work to which thy life has been devoted. Come and lay the storm; but come quickly, or thou wilt be too late!"

Before Copernicus had finished the perusal of this letter, he fell back voiceless and powerless into the arms of his faithful servant, and it was some moments before he rallied. When he again looked up, the horseman, who had been charged to escort him back, asked him how soon he would wish to set out.

"I must set out directly," replied the old man in a resigned tone; "but not for Nurem-

berg or for Culm: the suffering workmen at Frauenberg are expecting me; they may perhaps die if I go not to their assistance. My enemies may perhaps destroy my work—they cannot stop the stars in their courses!"

An hour later, Copernicus was at Frauenberg. The machine which he had bestowed upon this town, which was built on the summit of a hill, conveyed thither the waters of the river Bouda, situated at the distance of half a league in the valley below. The inhabitants, instead of suffering, like their fathers, from continued drought, had now only to turn a valve, and the plenteous stream flowed into their houses in rich abundance.

This machine had got out of order the preceding day, and the accident had happened very inopportunely, because, according to the superstitions of the age, this was the festival of the "patron saint" of Frauenberg. But at the first glance the canon saw where the evil lay, and in a few hours the water again flowed freely into the town. His first cares, we need

not say, had been directed to the unhappy men who had received injuries while working in the sluices: he set their fractured limbs, and bound them up with his own hands, then commending them to the care of an attendant, he promised to return and visit them on the morrow. But a blow was about to descend upon himself which was destined to crush him to the dust.

As he crossed the square, while passing through the town on his return home, he perceived amidst the crowd a company of strolling players acting upon a temporary stage. The theatre represented an astronomical observatory, filled with all sorts of ridiculous instruments; in the midst stood an old man, whose dress and bearing were in exact imitation of those of Copernicus. The resemblance was so striking, that he directly recognised himself, and paused, stupefied with astonishment. Behind the Merry-Andrew, whose business it was thus to hold up the great man to public derision, there stood a personage whose horns and cloven foot designated him as a representation

of Satan, and who caused the pretended Copernicus to act and speak, as though he had been an automaton, by means of two strings fastened to his ears—which were no other than asses' ears, of considerable dimensions. The parody was composed of several scenes. In the first, the astronomer gave himself to Satan, burnt a copy of the Bible, and trampled a crucifix under foot: in the second, he explained his system, by juggling with apples in guise of planets, while his head was transformed into a likeness of the sun by means of torches of resin: in the third, he became a charlatan, a vender of pomatum and quack medicines—he spoke dog-Latin to the passers-by; sold them water, which he had drawn from his own well, at an exorbitant price; and became intoxicated himself with excellent wine, in such copious draughts of which did he indulge, that he finally disappeared under the table: in the fourth and closing act he was again dragged forth to view as one accursed of God and man; and the devil, dragging him

down to the infernal regions amidst a cloud of sulphurous smoke, declared his intention of punishing him for having caused the earth to turn on its axis, by condemning him to remain with his head downwards throughout eternity.

When Copernicus thus beheld the treasured discoveries of his whole life held up to the derision of an ignorant multitude, his enlightened faith branded as impiety, and his self-denying benevolence ridiculed as the quackery of a charlatan, his noble spirit was at first utterly overwhelmed, and the most fearful doubts of himself, of mankind, and even of Providence itself, rushed upon his mind. At first he hoped that the Frauenbergians, the children of his adoption, to whose comfort and happiness he had devoted himself for fifty years, would cut short the disgraceful scene. But, alas! he saw his defamers welcomed with applause by those on whom he had conferred so many benefits. The trial was too much for his failing strength; and worn out by the emotions and fatigue of the preceding night, and by the labours of the

morning, he sunk exhausted to the ground. Then, for the first time, did the ungrateful multitude recognise their benefactor; the name of Copernicus flew from lip to lip—they heard that he had come that very morning to the town in order to relieve their distress. In a moment the current of popular feeling was turned,—their ingratitude was quickly changed to remorse—the crowd dispersed the actors, and pressed anxiously round the astronomer. He had only strength left to call for a litter, and was conveyed back to Wernica in a dying state. He lingered, however, still for five days—days of trial and anxiety—during which the lamp of genius and of faith still shed its halo around the dying man. On the day succeeding his visit to Frauenberg, a letter from Rheticus confirmed the sinister predictions of the bishop of Culm. Thrice had the students of the university made an attempt to invade the printing-office whence the truth was about to issue forth. "Even this very morning," wrote his friend, "a set of madmen tried to set fire

to it. I have assembled all our friends within the building, and we never quit our posts either day or night, guarding the entrance, and keeping watch over the workmen. The printers perform their work with one hand, while they hold a pistol in the other. If we can stand our ground for two days, thy book is saved; for let only ten copies be struck off, and nothing will any longer be able to destroy it. But if either to-day or to-morrow, our enemies should succeed in gaining the upper hand" Rheticus left the sentence unfinished, but Copernicus supplied the want—he knew how much depended upon this moment. On the third day another messenger made his appearance, and he, too, was the bearer of evil tidings: "A compositor, gained over by our enemies, has delivered into their hands the manuscript of the book, and it has been burned in the public square. Happily the impression was complete, and we are now putting it into press. . . . But a popular tumult might yet ruin all!"

Such was the state of suspense in which the great Copernicus passed the closing days of his existence! Life was ebbing fast, and the torpor of death had already begun to steal over his faculties, when a horseman galloped up to the door in breathless haste, and springing from his horse, hastened into the house of the dying astronomer. A volume, whose leaves were still damp, was treasured in his bosom; it was the great work of Copernicus; *this* messenger brought tidings of victory.

The spark of life, so nearly extinguished, seemed to be rekindled for a moment in the breast of the dying man: he raised himself in his bed, grasped the book with his feeble hand, and glanced at its contents with his dim, expiring eye. A smile lighted up his features; the book fell from his grasp; and, clasping his hands together, he exclaimed, "Lord, let thy servant now depart in peace!" Hardly had he uttered these words, before his spirit fled from earth to return to the God who gave it. It was the morning of the 23d May—day had

not yet dawned—heaven was still lighted up with stars—the earth was fragrant with flowers —all nature seemed to sympathize with the great revealer of her laws; and soon the sun, rising above the horizon, shed his earliest and purest ray upon the still, cold brow of the devout astronomer.

Persecution followed Copernicus even in the grave. The court of Rome replied to his dedication by condemning his book; but the book was the instrument of its own revenge by enlightening the court of Rome herself, which at last recognised, although too late, the faith and the genius of the astronomer of Wernica. Prussia, with the ingratitude of a conqueror, has converted the observatory of Copernicus into a prison, and is now allowing his dwelling-house to crumble into ruins. But Poland, his native land, has collected some of her last *oboles*,* to raise a monument to his memory at Cracow, and to erect a statue of him in Warsaw.

* A small coin.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

I SAY to thee—do thou repeat
To the first man thou mayest meet
In lane, highway, or open street,—

That he and we and all men move
Under a canopy of love,
As broad as the blue sky above;

That doubt and trouble, fear and pain
And anguish, all are shadows vain,
That death itself shall not remain;

That weary deserts we may tread,
A dreary labyrinth may thread,
Through dark ways underground be led;

Yet, if we will one Guide obey,
The dreariest path, the darkest way
Shall issue out in heavenly day;

And we, on divers shores now cast,
Shall meet, our perilous voyage past,
All in our Father's house at last.

And ere thou leave him, say thou this,
Yet one word more,—They only miss
The winning of that final bliss,

Who will not count it true, that Love,
Blessing, not cursing, rules above,
And that in it we live and move.

And one thing further make him know,—
That to believe these things are so,
This firm faith never to forego,

Despite of all that seems at strife
With blessing, all with curses rife,
That *this* is blessing, *this* is life.



"He set his inquiring eyes on me, and I tried to explain what I meant." p. 200.

THE CRIPPLE.

"O what a garden will be seen
When all the flowers of grace
Appear in everlasting green
Before the Planter's face."

On a sunny day in autumn I passed a wheeled chair standing before a cottage door, in which a young man sat. It occurred to me, that this must be the cripple who, by the kindness of a worthy neighbour, had, for several months, procured books from our Sunday-school Library. He had come into the town only last winter, and I had not seen him before; but I turned back, and began to talk with him. I spoke of his privations, both as to the means of earning his bread, and enjoying the freedom and health common to his age. He said it was trying, but he did not wish to murmur, for he knew who sent him his trouble.

I replied, "that that was the best knowledge, for, if he knew God and himself, he would be sure that God did all things well, and that he deserved and needed chastening."

He shook his head and sighed. I spoke to him with earnestness, (which I since have known was given me of God,) of the happiness of divine communion, and the joy he might possess in his solitude and confinement, by feeling that he had a Father and a Friend in heaven, who knew his wants, pitied his sufferings, and had provided for him a Redeemer. He lifted up his drooping head, and said, "I do not understand you." There was something touching in the candour of this confession, quite unlike the senseless assent which so often chills the hearts of those who endeavour to convey spiritual instruction. He set his inquiring eyes on me, and I tried to explain what I meant. He sighed often, and replied once or twice, "We should do so," when I urged on him the importance of the care of his soul. I remember speaking with energy on the de-

ceitful word "should," which many pacify themselves with, as if assenting to a duty were doing it.

But I cannot pretend to give the words of the conversation, though I now wish I had taken notes of it at the time. In the course of it his mother came and stood within the door, and I observed her weep, but she did not advance, and I think I did not speak to her. I that day sent him a new book, and did not see him again till about the last day of October, when I went, accompanied by a young friend. We found him sitting up in bed, with a blanket pinned round him, and learned that he had been ill of a cold for two days, which made respiration so difficult that he could not recline in the least. I asked him if ever he had thought of our former conversation. His eyes instantly were filled with tears, and he said, "Yes, but not so much as I ought."

I asked, "Do you now understand what communion with God is?"

"No," said he, "not by experience."

"Do you wish to know it, Adam?"

"I should do it," replied he.

"What, have you gone no farther yet than to *I should do it!* Oh, have done with that, and begin to do; many have died thinking they *should* begin to care for their souls."

"I believe that," said he, shaking his head, and all his face working with emotion.

"But, if you sit at the foot of a hill all day wishing to get to the top, you will be no nearer at night; yet if you get up and begin to walk, though you may find it steep, though you may often stop to rest, yet you will get on by degrees, and, at last, reach the top."

"What must I do then?" asked the poor youth, with a look of intense anxiety. I lifted up my soul to God, for I saw that his Spirit was piercing the heart of this amiable sufferer; and then, taking a Bible from the table, I asked him if he remembered the conversation of Christ with Nicodemus. After speaking of the anxiety of mind which the ruler of the Jews must have suffered, when he went in the

night to seek instruction, sacrificing his rest, because he could not obtain courage to go during the day,—of the kindness with which he was received and taught,—Adam said, "You need not read the chapter, for my mother has been reading it to me; but we cannot think what is the meaning of being born again."

I began to explain, and words and ideas and illustrations came so fast upon me, that it seemed amazing to myself. There was both heart and life in me, and in my auditors. The mother stood by a chair, on which her tears fell like rain. I showed him how a new heart, a clean heart, a heart of flesh, repentance, being renewed in the spirit of the mind, &c., all mean the same thing, as Christ told Nicodemus; and that it was no new doctrine first promulgated at the coming of Christ. David had prayed for it, in the 51st Psalm; and God had promised it, in the 36th chapter of Ezekiel. I spoke of the evil nature which made such a change needful, and heard him say, he thought he understood me.

When we arose to take leave, he said, "The first day you spoke to me, I did not know who you were; no one had ever spoken to me so before; I might say like David, 'no man cared for my soul.' I wondered, and could not get the things you said out of my mind."

I said I would come back soon, at which he expressed a lively satisfaction. Then I told him, if he had ever expressed such a wish, I would have returned sooner; for I only wanted to be made welcome, to encourage me to revisit him.

He said he feared he had not been anxious enough to induce him to *make free* to trouble me. This day was Thursday.

On Saturday I returned, and found him looking worse, and sitting on the spot where I saw him before; never having lain down, and never having slept longer than till his head nodded, which always roused him again. But he spoke little of his body, and immediately reverted to our last conversation. He said he had been trying to pray, but his heart

was backward, he was not earnest enough. And then he said, (what I found he also said to the friend who had first got him books from the library,) "that he never till now saw the depravity of his heart, for he always fancied that he was as free from sin as his neighbours. Indeed, his heart was not so evil as theirs." He remarked also, that "we are poor creatures, and can do nothing of ourselves."

I warned him against taking up the notion that lulls many people into a false security. I said, "You cannot sanctify your heart, but you can ask of God to sanctify it by his Holy Spirit. You cannot wash out your sins, but you can beg of Christ to do it. If you were floating down a river and could not get out, you could yet call to those on the bank to throw you a rope." I then repeated some Scripture invitations to pray, and promises to answer prayer, and some such injunctions as, "*Put off* the old man with his deeds, and *put on* the new man."—"*Strive* to enter in."—"*Run* with patience;"—all which argue acti-

vity in the person to whom salvation is given. He said, "I see all that now; it has been my laziness." I then referred to the Prodigal Son, and explained the parable to him. He seemed deeply interested, and wept when I described the father seeing him when yet a great way off and running to meet him. This day I offered to pray with him, for which both he and his mother thanked me repeatedly.

I did not see him again till Monday, but learned, in the interval, that the friend who had accompanied me on my first visit had called, and he had asked her which chapter in Ezekiel has the promise of taking away the stony heart; and which Psalm has the prayer for cleansing the heart, for he had been searching, and could not find them. She read the passages, in which he was much interested.

On Monday he asked me what was meant by the prayer of the wicked being an abomination to the Lord? He looked troubled. I explained it as well as I could, and then besought him not to keep from prayer because of his wicked-

ness, using the homely illustration of Dr. Malan, "If you want your linen washed, will you take a great deal of trouble to make it a little cleaner before you give it to the wash-woman?" I told him, if he did not come to Christ till he was good and fit, he would never come. I also told him, that the late Rev. Andrew Gray, of Glasgow, in one of his sermons, remarks, that the "Intercessor who pleads at the right hand of God, makes our petitions fit as he presents them, and that we very likely would not know our own prayers again if we heard them, when offered by the Mediator."

I did not see him again till Wednesday, after it was dark, when I was kindly accompanied by a clergyman. While he was asking the mother if she could not fall on some method to relieve the weary body, (and, indeed, he was then a touching spectacle, worn out by want of sleep, bathed in perspiration, and panting for breath,) I drew near the bed, and he instantly said, "Oh, how impatient I was for you to come: I think this is death, and I am not

ready." There was an expression of alarm and anguish in his fine countenance.

I replied, "I hope it is but the effect of a bad cold, and may go off; but it is good to be ready, for we know not the day nor the hour." I inquired what he felt. He said he was convinced of sin; that he had now given up all other hopes of mercy, and had been trying all day to lay hold on Christ; for he saw there was no other Saviour; but, though he cried, he could feel no comfort, as if his prayers were heard. I told him that the Bible does not fix the time when prayers shall be answered, and that he need not wonder, if he had neglected God four-and-twenty years, that he did not find comfort in the first hour in which he wished for it. God had waited to be gracious when he did not regard; now he must wait; but if he sowed in tears, he should surely reap in joy.

He said, "Oh, if I had my time again, when I used to read vain books and neglect the Bible!"

I answered him, "I hope it is God who has put this concern into your heart, and he

never gave a praying spirit without designing to give the blessing."

"I wish it may be so," sighed the poor sufferer; "pray for me."

The clergyman conversed with him of the reason why God afflicts, and prayed with him.

Next morning I went up, and found him much worse. I talked with him of the purposes of mercy which the Father has toward his children, and of the methods of chastening by which he fits them to receive his blessing,—of the unchangeableness of his favour, and the un-upbraiding generosity with which he gives liberally even to rebels; and of the sin of unbelief, as making God a liar; a fearful expression, which the apostle uses in all its strength. I asked him if a man were often to assure him of his kindness, and tell what he would do for him, if it would not be very provoking that he should receive his assurances with cold incredulity; and then spoke of the parable where, when the creditor saw that the debtors had nothing to pay, he *frankly* forgave them both.

Poor Adam always looked a great deal more than he spoke, and that day his tearful eye followed mine, as if he would have taken in all the meaning with it. I said—

> "They who once his kindness prove,
> Find it everlasting love."

"But," inquired he, "how does it say in Genesis that it *repented* God that he had made man?"

I tried to explain, that some expressions in Scripture are used to suit our narrow comprehensions; and spoke of it never being said that it repented God that he had redeemed man.

He complained of weakness and wandering of mind during the last night; and his mother said he had been tried in the course of it in various ways; at times his head wandering; at times engaged in prayer with great fear; and at times in severe bodily pain.

He was very low, so that I spoke less to him than usual. He again lamented his love of vain books; repeated his conviction that

Christ is the only means of our entering the kingdom of heaven, and said with feebleness, "I desire to trust in Him." The doctor came in; and, after hearing his opinion, I left him.

Next day, a worthy neighbour, who was there, said, "Oh, I am glad you are come to see the last;" and we beheld poor Adam trying to lean on his weeping mother, who was behind him, bending as he bent, and stretching her willing arms, and knees, and breast, in her fruitless endeavours to give him rest. But it is only in the grave that such weariness can find repose. His handsome countenance was all altered; his lips parched, and black, and never closed; his eyes often turned up in anguish, till the pupils were hid, but, when they returned to their place, as full of intelligence as ever. He only shook his head when I said he was very ill. I offered a short prayer to the God who can deliver in all extremities; put a cordial to his mouth, which afforded no relief, and sat down for half an

hour to watch the approach of the king of terrors.

It was painful to hear the faint cough, which was succeeded by a rattle in the throat. It was lamentable to see the teeth clenched together at every respiration, for several breaths in succession; to see the anxious eye, the occasional knitting of the brow, the ceaseless motion of the weary head. Surely to such as these Jesus addressed his "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden." I repeated that, and several other scriptures. At "I am the resurrection and the life," he looked with lively intelligence for a while; his tongue moved, but in vain, to give utterance to his thought. At last, after watching his tongue, for his lips could not move, I thought I caught his meaning, and asked if he said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." He bowed, with a gentle smile, (it was in a pause of his anguish,) and looked with a calm, satisfied air on me for a moment. The time compelled us to leave him. At parting, I said, "Farewell, Adam, lean on

Jesus, the Redeemer of your soul; he will wipe all tears from your eyes." And again, "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon thee; the Lord give thee peace." He looked earnestly, bowed his head, and looked again wistfully. In an hour after, his warfare was accomplished, and his iniquity, I trust, pardoned.

I called on his mother after the funeral, and learned the following story of Adam's brief life:—His father died when he was sixteen months old. When six years old, he was seized by a fever. After it was gone, it was found that his spine was injured. By degrees he lost the use of his limbs, but he was able to teach himself to read and write with very little assistance. He could, for some years, move out of bed to a table which was placed close to it, and put on his own clothes. At that period his mother was used to leave him with a day's provision on the table, while she went to wash at a neighbour's a few miles off, so that much of his life was solitary. He used to read all

sorts of books, but the Bible was what he always read first in the morning. His mother often remonstrated against his fondness for novels, to which he was passionately devoted. She told me her motive for asking books from our library was, that she might induce him to relinquish these works of fiction. He was used to knit stockings; but this employment became too heavy for his hands, and he felt pain, which obliged him to relinquish it.

Five years ago he removed, with his mother, to this neighbourhood. He had but once in his life, before coming to this place, been visited by a clergyman; and this visit had been a great gratification to him. Twice, after his removal hither, his mother had him conveyed to the place of worship at which she attended, to hear and see the services of a sacramental Sabbath, and these were the only opportunities the poor young man had of external instruction during twenty-four years. Surely in his ignorance he was of that number for whom it shall be more tolerable in

the day of judgment than for those who use and abuse many sacred privileges. His mother mentioned a Sabbath evening, within the last year, when two men, who lodged in the house, entered into some idle conversation about the formation of the globe. Adam listened for some time in silence, but at length he broke out with indignation, and desired them either to discuss their worldly subjects no farther, or to go elsewhere. He was used to observe the Sabbath, but his mother never saw him offended by the breach of it before.

After the day I spoke to him in his wheeled chair, his mother described him as sitting very much dejected; and when she bade him cheer up, and not lay to heart what that stranger had said to him, he replied, that it was all true, at least he feared it was, and he was all in the wrong. He particularly repeated many times, "She said, if I were to promise you a nice sofa, with plenty of pillows, where you could lie down and rest when you would, how

much you would think of it, and how you would long for its being ready. Or if some nobleman were to promise you a carriage, by means of which you could procure air and exercise, and be delivered in part from your confinement, what good spirits you would be in—how you would rejoice when it drove up, and you rode away to enjoy yourself. Now the King of kings has offered you heaven and happiness and holiness, and to free you from pain and infirmity, and to make you complete in Christ. Have these offers ever affected you? Does your mind dwell with pleasure on them?" And after thus repeating my words, he used to accuse himself of neglecting the care of his soul, and regret that he did not understand more of these things. But both mother and son said the impression had worn off in some degree, till it returned with deeper effect on my revisiting him. After the first of my visits since his sickness began, he often spent twenty minutes at a time in prayer, and often deplored his former vain reading, and

his ignorance of the will of God. He thought from the beginning of his trouble that he was dying; often repeated passages of Scripture, which he remembered from his former reading, and spoke of the humble narrator as the person who had been sent to warn him of his danger. His poor mother said, that after I took my final leave of him, a few minutes before he expired, he made signs to her to come near, and said, so far as she could make out his meaning, "Now, mother, *fear* God; for if you do you will love him, and then you will serve him; and I have the comfort to tell you, that all my fears are removed!"

I learned afterwards that the cold which terminated poor Adam's short but lingering life, was contracted the week before he died. The tediousness of his monotonous days, and the hankering of his mind after such varieties and amusements as came within his reach, had induced him to expose himself for several hours on a cold damp day, when he was drawn in his chair, to witness a street-pageant. He never

removed, after that day, from his sad seat in the bed where he expired.

How striking the revolution of sentiment and feeling which was, to all human appearance, wrought by the Divine Spirit in the momentous fortnight,—a revolution which elevated his taste and desires far above carnal things, and made him long to drink of that fountain of living water which has its source in the love of God, and is communicated to us through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Of the same character with his curiosity to witness public shows, was the insatiable desire of this poor youth for works of fiction. And for a heart gentle and tender as his, which had scarcely any object to expand itself upon but his mother, there must have been an attractive charm in the fine-spun fancies and highly-wrought scenes of the tales in which he so much delighted. Not any such apology, however, would he make, or allow to be made for him. When his mind was truly awake to the incalculable importance of eternity, and to

the claim our Father in heaven lays on all our heart, and all our mind, and all our soul, and all our strength, he could not refrain from exclaiming, "Oh, if I had my time again!" And, doubtless, had his days been prolonged till he had felt more the difficulty of regulating his own heart on the one hand, and tasted more of the pure consolations which are to be found in seeking the Lord, and in studying his word on the other, he would have discovered more fully the value of what he had wasted.

Will not our young friends profit by the experience of the poor cripple, and make the most of every day and every hour as they pass? Time spent in vain amusements or unprofitable reading, is worse than wasted. It is perverted; and when we come to the end of life, the recollection of our folly will be as a thorn in our dying pillow.

THE MYSTERY OF NATURE,

THE TYPE OF A GLORIOUS RESURRECTION.

WHY roam'st thou, sad and downward-eyed,
Pale pilgrim, sable clad?
While earth bedecks her like a bride,
In vernal sunshine glad.

"The snowdrop's reign is almost gone,
And gayer flowers unfold,
Narcissus with its clusters fair,
And crocus gleaming gold.

"But thou the while dost paler grow,
More sadness hangs o'er thee,
As if this pomp of loveliness
It sickened thee to see."

"There was a time when I drank in
The sunshine of the spring,
Which now upon my faded brow
Doth baneful shadows fling.

"But nature's face is changed to me,
In funeral trappings clad;
The more all other hearts are gay,
The more my heart is sad.

"Earth, in her winter dress of gloom,
Is welcome to my eye,
But spare me all her pomp and glare
Of vernal pageantry."

"O say not so, thou pilgrim pale,
But muse and pray a while;
And so shall nature's darkened face
Resume its morning smile.

"Look on her with the eye of faith,
And so thy heart shall learn,

Of her mysterious loveliness
The meaning to discern.

"We may not turn in gloom away,
For One her ground hath trod,
And left a glory round her path,
Our Master and our God;

"And since that hour, this wondrous world
Is but the outer shell,
Which wraps a world more wondrous still,
Wherein his chosen dwell.

"And he who framed that inner world
With his creative breath,
Has rent in twain the barrier stern
That parted life from death.

"Alike on either side the tomb
That unseen realm is spread,
It knows no severing line between
The living and the dead.

"The saints we see not, gathered there,
Blend with the saints we see;
One hidden life pervading all
In mystic unity.

"And in the fulness of the time,
This outer world of sin
Shall burst and shrivel, and disclose
The glorious world within.

"Then shall the sons of God no more
Seem like to sons of clay,
Their hidden, holy, heavenly life
Made manifest that day.

"And all the beauty that we see
Clothing this outer earth,
Is but the type, perchance the germ,
Of her immortal birth.

"Then shrink not from the gorgeous spring,
For all her flowers are born,

Blest harbingers! to herald forth
The resurrection morn.

"And dream of dreariness no more,
But rouse thee—toil and pray:
So thou in thine own lot may'st stand,
Safe on that awful day."



3477 7

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Oct. 2005

PreservationTechnologies
A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION
111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 016 063 677 4